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TAMRON



Contents

Amateur Photographer For everyone who loves photography

Updates and minor variations



Damien Demolder
Editor

Sony's efforts in Alpha land have been very impressive since the company took control of the old Minolta Dynax

brand. It was a bit of a slow start and the razzmatazz that surrounded the first DSLR, the ten-million-pixel Alpha 100, had almost faded into a historical black hole before a second body was dropped into the system. Since then, in a period of less than four years, the list of past and present models in the system has grown to 12. Yet the impressive growth has faltered in recent times, and Sony has given itself to updates and minor variations. This is a standard practice in the lower end of the market, where a pair of functions and £50 can happily separate two bodies, but slight alterations rarely occur in higher-end cameras except in established systems. I am not alone in wondering why the Alpha 850 has been allowed to drain Sony's marketing and research budgets when the company already had the 24MP full-frame base very well covered. There is no question the Alpha 850 is an excellent and highly desirable camera, but no more so than the existing Alpha 900. I can't think why Sony wanted to use energy introducing a duplicate when there are other areas in which it could have spent more wisely.

Our question of the week

The results for the poll from the AP Christmas special (19 December-26 December) will appear in next week's issue.

This week we ask...

Do you think Sony's Alpha range is as good as Minolta itself would have produced?

- A Yes, just as good
- B Yes, and better
- C No
- D Don't know

Vote online
www.amateurphotographer.co.uk

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COVER STORY

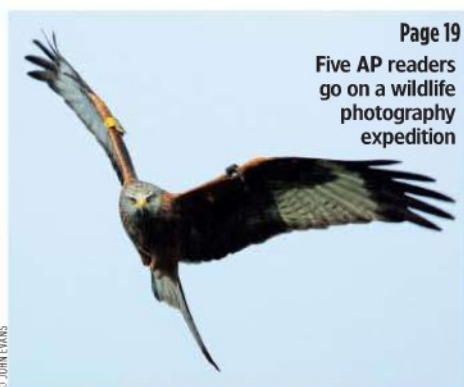
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The PNY Optima 16GB SDHC memory card and Hama Softbox Air flash diffuser



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Five AP readers go on a wildlife photography expedition

© JOHN EVANS

Send us your pictures

To have your pictures published in Gallery, send in a selection of up to ten images. They can be either a selection of different images or all have the same theme. Digital files sent on CD should be saved in a Photoshop-compatible format, such as JPEG or TIFF, with a contact sheet and submission form. Visit www.amateurphotographer.co.uk/apgallery for details. We cannot publish images without the necessary technical details. Each RGB image should be a minimum of 2480 pixels along its longest length. Transparencies and prints are also accepted. We recommend that transparencies are sent without glass mounts and posted via Special Delivery. For transparencies, prints or discs to be returned you must include an SAE with sufficient postage.

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© CRAIG ROBERTS

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COVER STORY

The Sony Alpha 850 offers a full-frame sensor with 24.6 million pixels and costs less than any other camera of its type. Angela Nicholson gives her verdict



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Our address and other contact details

Amateur Photographer,
IPC Media, Blue Fin Building,
110 Southwark Street, London SE1 0SU

AP Editorial Telephone: 0203 148 4138
Fax 0203 148 8130
Email amateurphotographer@ipcmedia.com
AP Advertising Telephone: 0203 148 2517
Email lee_morris@ipcmedia.com
AP Subscriptions Telephone: 0845 676 7778
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News | Analysis | Comment | PhotoDiary 9/1/10

News

“They would send a request saying they wanted such and such a target to be photographed and we knew this was part of their planning”
War veteran on aerial photo mission

Photographers spark fresh terror fears | AP forces police statement

City photographers should carry ID, say police

AP RIGHTS WATCH
Committed to defending your photographic rights!

CITY OF London Police have urged photographers to carry identification to avoid suspicion that they may be involved in planning a terrorist operation.

Police issued the advice as AP urged them to clarify their policy in the Square Mile after photographers taking pictures of buildings prompted fresh security concerns.

In a statement released to AP, City of London Police said: ‘Photographers should carry identification where possible and be prepared to answer questions about why they are taking photographs, if they are asked.’

The advice adds: ‘Police and security officers have a duty to protect the public, and the City of London has traditionally been a high-profile target for terrorists.’

Among those angered by the statement is architectural photographer Grant Smith, who was stopped recently while taking

pictures of a bank building near St Paul’s Cathedral. ‘I am staggered by this,’ he said. ‘It’s absurd.’

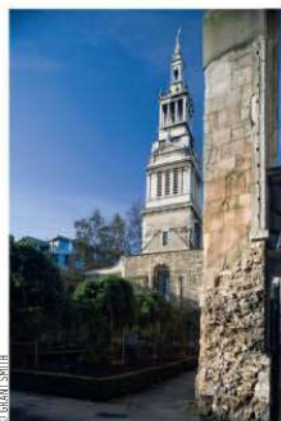
Smith said three police cars and a police van – with blue lights flashing and sirens blaring – were called after he declined to provide his details to a security guard at the Merrill Lynch Bank of America building.

‘Five or six police officers leapt out of their cars and came marching toward me... all I had was a backpack and a tripod,’ Smith told AP.

Smith later said he had been taking pictures of ‘the remaining steeple of Christ Church, Newgate, as part of a personal project that happened to be near the Merrill Lynch building on Cheapside.’

The officers told Smith they had powers, under the Terrorism Act, to search him after they received a report of an ‘aggressive male’ who had refused to leave the building’s reception area.

Smith, who is from Australia, said that he merely declined to provide identification to the security guards, telling them: ‘I am not obliged to show it to you. I am taking photographs.’



© GRANT SMITH

I am not doing anything wrong. I am in a public space.’

Police searched the photographer’s camera bag and detained him until he identified himself.

A police spokesman said: ‘Security staff at a City bank reported concern over the apparently hostile behaviour of a man taking pictures of their staff. When questioned by officers the man declined to give any explanation.’

‘He was therefore informed that in light of the concerns of the security staff, and in the absence of an explanation, he would be searched under Section 44 of the Terrorism Act 2000.’

Smith, who was wearing a badge stating ‘I’m a photographer not a terrorist’, had been using a Nikon D3X digital SLR.

Continued on page 6

SNAP SHOT

Amateur arrested

As we went to press, an amateur photographer was arrested while taking photographs of posters on a building in Hounslow, west London. Photography enthusiast Karol Berezowski said officers handcuffed him before taking him by car to Hounslow Police Station where he was held for three hours. Berezowski said that officers told him they wanted to search him using their anti-terrorism powers. He claims police forced him to the ground before bundling him into a police car. Police confirmed that a man was arrested for a Public Order Offence, but declined to comment further.

Oskar Barnack competition

Professional photographers are invited to enter the Leica Oskar Barnack competition, which boasts a top prize of €5,000 and is open for entries from 15 January–15 March 2010. This year’s contest also includes a Newcomer Award, aimed at all ‘prospective’ professional photographers aged 25 and under. Entrants for the latter category are asked to submit 10–12 ‘self-contained’ images in which the photographer ‘perceives and documents the interaction between man and the environment with acute vision and contemporary visual style – creative, groundbreaking and unintrusive.’ For details visit www.leica-oskar-barnack-award.com from 15 January.



Pentax ‘weather-resistant’ macro lens

PENTAX has unveiled a 100mm f/2.8 macro lens designed for use on film and digital SLRs.

The 100mm Pentax-D FA Macro f/2.8 WR is designed to deliver the 35mm viewing angle equivalent of a 153mm lens when used on a DSLR with an APS-C-size sensor.

The lens features a Super Protect coating designed to repel dust, water and grease, and minimise fingerprints and ‘cosmetic spots’.

Features include eight diaphragm blades and a minimum focusing distance of 0.303m.

This is the first Pentax

interchangeable macro lens to house a ‘completely rounded diaphragm blade’. The firm claims: ‘This creates a natural, beautiful bokeh, while minimising the streaking effect of point light sources.’

It is due out in ‘December/January’, priced £679.99.

PhotoDiary

A week of photographic opportunity

WEDNESDAY

6 JANUARY

EXHIBITION James Kirkman Inspired Me features 'juxtapositions' in photographs and paintings by various artists, until the end of February at Arden and Anstruther, Sussex GU28 0AG. Tel: 01798 344 411. Visit www.ardenandanstruther.com. **EXHIBITION** Keep the World Wild by Roger Hooper, until 21 January at Hoopers Gallery, London EC1R 0AA. Tel: 0207 490 3907. Visit www.hoopersgallery.co.uk.

THURSDAY 7 JANUARY

EXHIBITION iClick by students includes images by Harry Potter actress Katie Leung, until 10 January at the gallery@oxo, South Bank, London SE1. **EXHIBITION** Science in Focus – scientists photographed by Anton Corbin and John O'Grady, until 17 January at the National Portrait Gallery, London WC2H 0HE. Tel: 0207 306 0055. Visit www.npg.org.uk.



© KATIE LEUNG

FRIDAY

8 JANUARY

DON'T MISS Winter Walks through the deer park (11.15am–12.45pm) at Knole, Sevenoaks, Kent TN15 0RP. Tel: 01732 450 608. Visit www.nationaltrust.org.uk. **EXHIBITION** by various photographers, until 5 February at the recently opened HotShoe Gallery, London EC1N 8SW. Tel: 0207 421 6009. Visit www.hotshoegallery.com.

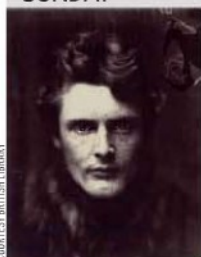
SATURDAY

9 JANUARY

EXHIBITION Icons of the Highway – photographs by Tony and Eva Worobiec at Lacock Abbey, Fox Talbot Museum and Village, Wiltshire SN15 2LG. Tel: 01249 730 459. Visit www.nationaltrust.org.uk. **EXHIBITION** Being Blondie: Debbie Harry by Brian Aris, until 11 January at Proud Camden, London NW1 8AH. Tel: 0207 482 3867. Visit www.proud.co.uk.

SUNDAY

10 JANUARY



COURTESY BRITISH LIBRARY

EXHIBITION Points of View: Capturing the 19th Century in Photographs, until 7 March at The British Library, London NW1 2DB. Tel: 0207 412 7332. Visit www.bl.uk. **EXHIBITION** Sleepless by contemporary photographer Vered Lahav, until 23 January at Wolverhampton Art Gallery, West Midlands WV1 1DU. Tel: 01902 552 055. Visit www.veredlahav.com.

MONDAY

11 JANUARY

EXHIBITION Something for Everyone, includes work by Helmut Newton, Richard Avedon and Don McCullin, until 16 January at Hamiltons Gallery, London W1K 2EU. Tel: 0207 499 9493. Visit www.hamiltonsgallery.com. **EXHIBITION** by Bill Rowlinson and Richard Nicholson, until 27 January at Photofusion, London SW9 8LA. Tel: 0207 738 5774. Visit www.photofusion.org.

TUESDAY

12 JANUARY

EXHIBITION OpenSee by Jim Goldberg, until 17 January at The Photographers' Gallery, London WC2H 7HB. Tel: 0845 262 1618. Visit www.photonet.org.uk. **EXHIBITION** 28 Stories by graduates of the MA in Photojournalism and Documentary Photography, until 15 January at the London College of Communication Gallery Spaces, London SE1 6SB. Visit www.28stories.co.uk.

News

Continued from page 5



Committed to defending your photographic rights!

IN a separate incident, Graham White said he was stopped by a security guard while taking pictures of the Linklaters building, a law firm on Silk Street, EC2.

'The security guard told me I wasn't allowed to take pictures of their building. I pointed out that it was a public place and there were no restrictions on any photography, and that if he could show I was on private property I would happily stop and move on.'

The Linklaters security guard told White that the building was of 'no architectural interest' and that the City of London Police were asking that anyone seen taking pictures be reported to them.

A security official for Linklaters told AP that all the firm's security staff have been instructed to alert police about anyone taking photos – amateur or professional – unless the photographer has already notified security about their intentions.

'We can't stop them [the photographer],' he admitted,

but added: 'We would notify police that someone is taking photos of the building.'

He said security guards have to be aware of photographers seen taking pictures 'looking into the building' and which appear to include security staff.

A spokeswoman for City of London Police said that if security see someone taking pictures of 'personnel, entrances or cameras,' for example, and they feel concerned after asking them 'what they are doing,' then they are right to report it to the police.

She said security guards alert police 'if they are unsure' as to the nature of the photos.

Photographers are advised by police to inform a security

official of their intentions, prior to taking pictures.

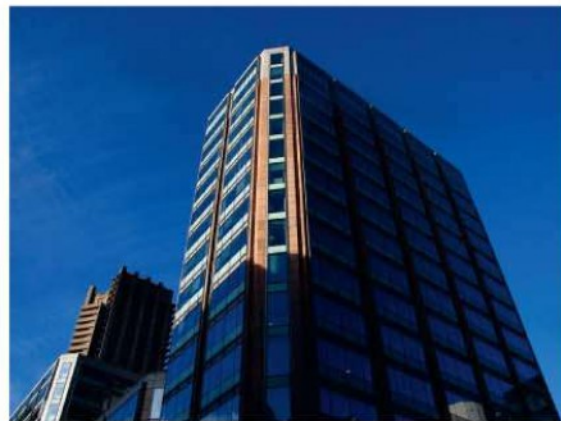
'We are chock full of iconic buildings and have had terrorist attacks,' the spokeswoman added.

An ITN film crew covering a story about Grant Smith (see page 5) were themselves quizzed while filming.

London Tonight reporter Marcus Powell was stopped by police in the City who told him that filming was not allowed.

The crew were allowed to continue, but only after Powell showed the police officer his press card.

The drama took place shortly before the ITN crew crossed the river to interview AP's news editor for an item broadcast on More4 News. To watch the news item visit www.amateurphotographer.co.uk.



© GRAHAM WHITE

Top Gear photographer blasts Met



Committed to defending your photographic rights!

A PHOTOGRAPHER who works for the BBC's *Top Gear* has blamed the attitude of London's police for restricting his shoots to locations away from the capital.

Freelance stills photographer Justin Leighton, who shoots behind-the-scenes for the *Top Gear* programme and magazine, said that taking photos in London often raises suspicion, even in areas where permission has already been given to shoot commercially.

Leighton – who wanted to make it clear he was speaking in a personal capacity and not on behalf of the *Top Gear* brand – told AP: 'The Met Police and Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) are a nightmare. They haven't got a clue what they are doing.'

He cited one recent incident in which a PCSO quizzed a *Top Gear* colleague who was photographing three supercars early one morning on Westminster Bridge, even though clearance had already been provided by the authorities.

Leighton, a former news photographer, said he is often forced to steer clear

of doing *Top Gear* shoots in the capital, opting for locations such as Bristol and Exeter where, he said, police officers adopt a more reasonable approach towards photographers.

Leighton works as a freelance photographer for BBC Worldwide. The BBC moved to distance itself from Leighton's comments.

A BBC spokeswoman told us: 'The BBC does not share these views.'

The Corporation declined to comment further.

We understand that the makers of *Top Gear* may be reluctant to further inflame photographers' relations with the Met.



SNAP SHOT

Courses

Five-day residential photography courses in south-west France are due to take place from March to November this year. The courses, based in the Quercy region, will be run by Graham Berry, a keen photographer and former cameraman for TV programme *Treasure Hunt*. Course levels range from beginner to more advanced. Each course costs £795 per person and includes tuition, materials, full board, local transport and airport transfers. For details call 00 33 565 314 972 or visit www.imagefrance.co.uk.

DxO Optics

DxO Optics has made its DxO Optics Pro v5.3.6 available for Apple Macintosh OS 10.6 Snow Leopard. It features raw-file support for 15 new cameras, including the Canon EOS 7D, Nikon D300S and Olympus E-620. The DxO standard edition costs £99. The Elite edition is priced at £199. For details visit www.dxo.com.

Hotshoe flash filters

New filters designed to fit all hotshoe-mounted flash units have been unveiled by Honi Photo. Priced £13.50 (not including VAT), the Honi Photo filters are available in three kits. The Sampler kit features such colours as Just Blue, Moss Green and Heavy Frost. The Autumn kit includes Chocolate and Dark Salmon, among others, while the Hollywood filter kit includes among its options Rose Purple and Follies Pink. For details call Flagship Photographic on 01202 733 123 or visit www.flaghead.co.uk.

Blind photographer

A man who is registered blind has opened his own exhibition in Edinburgh. Norman Taylor, who lost his sight five years ago, took up the hobby after encouragement from a friend, according to the *Galloway News*. Taylor told the paper: 'A lot of photographers are complacent. They do not look at the detail around them.'

Aerial photo mission not over yet

THE mission to analyse thousands of never-before-seen aerial reconnaissance photos that were used to help Britain's military during wartime may yet turn up more amazing discoveries, say researchers.

Images from The Aerial Reconnaissance Archives, which had been kept secret for decades, were unveiled in November as part of plans to digitise the photos for publication online.

The pictures, now declassified, were captured by reconnaissance planes during and since the Second World War.

Stored on thousands of rolls of microfilm, they include prisoners in the courtyard of Colditz prison and images taken during the D-Day battle. The online archive will allow the public to view the images in fine detail.

'We are uncovering new images every day, but to locate photographs with such powerful links to major events is incredibly exciting,' said Allan Williams, manager of the National Collection of

Aerial Photography, which is based in Edinburgh. 'Without doubt, we'll continue to make amazing discoveries.'

Among those who took part in reconnaissance missions – on board planes that carried no weapons – was Flight Lieutenant Jimmy Taylor, who told BBC News At Ten: 'They would send a request saying they wanted such and such a target to be photographed and we knew this was part of their planning for the advance into Holland and Germany... They wouldn't have asked unless it was important.'

The researchers' painstaking detective work included the analysis of squadron records to link reconnaissance flights to major events at the time.

They used geographic references to match the pictures to locations in the modern landscape.

The public can browse the aerial archive for free. However, 'in-depth viewing' requires a subscription, currently £15 for two years.



Police admission over terror stop details

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POLICE do not have the legal power to force photographers to supply their personal details if they are stopped while taking pictures.

Police forces nationwide have been warned that photographers are not legally required to provide their personal details when

stopped under either Section 44 of the Terrorism Act or a routine 'stop and account'.

The reminder was contained in a memo sent to forces by the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) before Christmas (see last week's News).

An ACPO spokeswoman told AP: 'The intention of the [ACPO] letter was to remind officers that there is no criminal offence in taking photographs.'

She added: 'There was an attachment to the letter, however, that detailed codes of practice, in which this was referred to.'

ACPO has also attempted to clarify photographers' legal rights under 'stop and account' where an officer asks a person what they are doing and for details such as name, date of birth, address and height.

During two recent high-

profile stops before Christmas, one involving a BBC photographer and the other a journalist for *The Independent*, a police officer recorded details such as name, address and date of birth on a 'stop and account' form, rather than an anti-terrorism 'stop and search' form.

A police officer is required by law to complete a stop and account form if they ask a member of the public to provide personal details.

However, the police officer is not legally required to tell the person that they do not have to supply this information, according to the Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO).

ACPO, which co-ordinates police policy in England and Wales, has pledged to question the Met Police over its procedures regarding 'stop and account' following concerns raised by AP that officers may be

choosing to use this rather than 'stop and search'.

ACPO spokesman Craig Mackey, who is the Chief Constable of Cumbria Police, told us: 'It [stop and account] is not a Terrorism Act power. It is very clear. A member of the public can say, "Thank you, officer, I've explained why I am here. I don't want to give any details."'.

He added: 'The point at which the officer starts asking, "What are you doing here?", the officer is required by law to complete the [stop and account] form. That's about accountability for the officer. It's not about exercise of power.'

Mackey said the public would expect the police to be vigilant near 'iconic sites' in London, for example.

He said it's about getting 'the balance of that conversation right and the manner of [the officer's] approach'.

Potter star reveals photo passion

KATIE Leung, who plays the character Cho Chang in the *Harry Potter* films, has spoken about her passion for photography. She said: 'Photography allows me to communicate in a certain way which words and other forms of art simply cannot, and it has ultimately changed the way in which I see the world.'

An image by Leung went on show alongside pictures captured by the winners of a national student competition organised by the charity Sightsavers International.

Katie added: 'Through my passion for this powerful



Katie said she followed the competition's theme in the photo she submitted to run alongside the students' competition entries

medium I am deeply grateful to be blessed with the wonderful gift of sight.'

The exhibition, called 'click – when actions speak louder than words', runs until 10 January 2010 at the gallery@oxo on London's South Bank.

Emily Tudor, 13, from Buckinghamshire, won top place in the contest's 11–14 years category. Stacy Leigh Stewart, 16, came first in the 15–16 years section, while Lolita Cameron, 17, triumphed in the 17–18 years category.

The competition carried the theme 'Body Language'.



Williams gong

The managing director of Annabel Williams' Cumbria-based photography business has scooped an 'Inspirational Women Award'. Catherine Connor, MD of Annabel Williams Contemporary Training Studio, won the honour from the Lakeland Business Women's Network.

E-P1 flash offer

Olympus is giving customers a free FL-14 flashgun on purchases of the E-P1 camera made before the end of January 2010. To qualify, customers must register their new E-P1 online and submit a receipt and barcode before 28 February 2010. For details visit www.olympus-consumer.com/en/promotions/eplpromo2009.popup.

Eastender dies

Photographer Harry Diamond, who has documented the changing landscape of London's East End since the 1960s, has died aged 85. 'He took pictures of East End people and artists, and became well known in the West End where he mingled with jazz musicians and other artists,' reported the *East London Advertiser*.

Citizen 'snoopers' photography threat?

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HARROW Council insists that its planned 'Neighbourhood Champions' scheme will not increase the likelihood of photographers being stopped by members of the public.

The London council was responding to concern raised by AP that the council-run scheme, due to begin this year, may adopt similar principles to a nationwide volunteer scheme set up by the Home Office last year.

Under the Home Office scheme, called Project Argus, members of the public are trained to be alert to possible dangers posed by people carrying cameras in busy areas, amid terrorism fears.

Harrow Council says that, under its Neighbourhood Champions scheme, volunteers will play a key role in alerting it to 'street issues' such as graffiti, noise nuisance and petty vandalism. The volunteers will be able to log their concerns on the Neighbourhood Champions website.

Backed by local police, the scheme is expected to be introduced early next year.

Asked whether the project will lead to more widespread suspicion over photographers

among members of the public, a Harrow Council spokeswoman said: 'This has nothing to do with our proposal', adding that any suspicion over terrorism, for example, would be a matter for police. She said that volunteers will be asked to approach the council if they see an 'abandoned car', for example. The council added: 'Harrow Police will be alerted swiftly if the issue concerns criminal activity.'

The council played down media reports that the scheme may infringe civil liberties. 'It has nothing to do with snooping,' the spokeswoman told AP.

Last April, we revealed that under the Home Office's Project Argus plan, the National Counter Terrorism Security Office (NaCTSO) aimed to train 60,000 volunteers as part of counter-terrorism measures in areas such as shopping centres, hotels and stations. Each training session lasts three hours.

The Home Office training draws on existing NaCTSO guidance regarding 'hostile reconnaissance'. This urges people to look out for 'overt/covert photography' as well as those in possession of 'photographs, maps, global positioning systems, photographic equipment, (cameras, zoom lenses, camcorders)'.

ClubNews

AP's weekly round-up of club news from all over Britain

Ipswich and District Photographic Society

The annual exhibition takes place from 3–13 March at Town Hall Galleries, The Council Chamber, Cornhill, Ipswich, Suffolk IP1 1DH. Tel: 01473 452 863. The galleries are open Tues–Sat 10am–5pm. Organisers promise an exhibition of prints and projected images including 'Natural History, Architecture and Life & Photojournalism'. For more details visit www.townhallgalleries.org.uk.

North & East Midlands Photographic Federation

The 55th annual exhibition takes place from 9 January–5 February at Rainbow Gallery, Durban House Heritage Centre, Mansfield Road, Eastwood Notts NG16 3DZ. It features images submitted by 38 clubs and societies, and will be opened by the Mayor of Broxtowe, Councillor John Longdon. Tel: 01773 717 353. Visit www.nempf.org for details.

Send club news to: apecvents@ipcmedia.com



Amateur Photographer 1887

AP had important news to share in its issue dated 14 January 1887. The journal had a plan: to present Her Majesty Queen Victoria with an 'Album of Photographs' to mark her past 50 years on the throne.

'We particularly wish to urge that the birth of modern photography almost exactly coincides with Her Majesty's accession to the throne. Photography has attained to its present perfection within these past 50 years,' reported AP. 'There is, we believe, no science or art which so exactly covers the years of Her Majesty's rule as our art-science of photography.'

F8 AT 30 WEEKS

Zena Holloway
Underwater Photographer

Shot by Nick Simpson
Equipment supplied by Zena, OMD & Kinetic

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SHARE THE PASSION

Review

Your guide to the latest photography books, exhibitions and websites



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Book review

Trading Places

The Merchants of Nairobi

By Steve Bloom

Thames & Hudson, hardback, 144 pages, £24.95, ISBN 978-0-500-543818

Known for his striking wildlife imagery and as a regular contributor to AP's *Photo Insight* pages, Steve Bloom takes a dramatic step away from his comfort zone with this latest release. In fact, everything about this feels different from what we've seen in the past from Steve, right down to his use of panoramic formats and minimalist portraiture. Taking a documentary approach, Steve has delved into the bustling world of Nairobi's small traders – a patchwork of narrow, earthen lanes and multi-coloured, hand-painted billboards over ramshackle storefronts in Kenya.

The book begins by setting the scene in a series of bright panoramas showing the clusters of shops and stalls, and patrons poking their heads in to see what's on offer. As it progresses, Steve singles out individual merchants and interviews them about their life and trade. He takes their portrait and photographs their wares, which range from domestic workers to cuts of meat. The common thread through all of this, though, is the wonderful graphics and storefronts which, when taken as a whole, form an intriguing procession of street art that is as colourful as the characters Steve interviews. **Jeff Meyer**



© STEVE BLOOM

Book review

Creative Digital Photography

52 Weekend Projects

Edited by Chris Gatcum

Ilex Press, paperback, 176 pages, £14.99,
ISBN 978-1-905814-61-9

The latest in Ilex's line of novel technique books is a collaborative affair by Chris Gatcum, AP's long-time technical writer, along with Damien Demolder, Angela Nicholson, Richard Sibley, former technical writer Barney Britton, and others. With that disclosure out of the way and with genuine enthusiasm, it needs to be said that *52 Weekend Projects* is a redefinition of the photo technique book.

We've seen other guides use the weekly project format, but where those authors have made vague suggestions for 'inspiring' pictures, Chris's guide illustrates and explains in meticulous step-by-step detail how to, for instance, build a light cube out of cardboard and torches for taking product shots and still lifes, or create a fisheye from an old door peephole. There is something for everyone in here, from building kit to new techniques, and the pictures are top-notch. In these belt-tightening times, this is the perfect guide to improve and experiment with your photography using a host of inexpensive everyday items. **Jeff Meyer**

Ilex Press is giving away three copies of 'Creative Digital Photography'. Send in a card with your name and address to Creative Digital Photography Offer, c/o Amateur Photographer, IPC Media, Blue Fin Building, 110 Southwark Street, London SE1 0SU, by Friday, 29 January 2010. The senders of the first three entries drawn at random will win a copy of the book.

AP will only use your data for the purposes of this competition.



Website

www.photographymeetups.com

While nothing beats the feeling of creating an image of one's own, there are few better things in life than sharing a picture-making experience with fellow enthusiastic photographers. Two photographers who realised the potential of this are Christian Carella and Mandar Karlekar, who jointly run Photography Meetups, 'the photographer's social networking site'. Each bi-monthly, London-based 'meet-up' has a designated theme and location. Participants have the chance to take images of key London places in relaxed, informal company and the meet-ups usually end in a nearby pub so there are plenty of opportunities to socialise with like-minded photographers. The most recent meet-up took place in Hyde Park's Winter Wonderland last month and previous destinations have included Kew Gardens and the London Wetland Centre. There are currently 1,600 members, and those who sign up for a yearly or half yearly membership can enter competitions, showcase their images on the website and receive priority invites to special events. Non-members are still able to attend at a cost of £5 or £6 on the day (excluding entry fees). A great website for photographers looking to share their photographic experiences with others. **Gemma Padley**



Exhibition

Shaped by War: Photographs by Don McCullin

6 February-13 June 2010

Imperial War Museum North, The Quays, Trafford Wharf Road, Trafford Park, Manchester M17 1TZ. Open every day 10am-6pm (Nov-Feb 10am-5pm). Tel: 0161 836 4000. Website: <http://north.iwm.org.uk>. Admission free

Don McCullin is a photographer who has been at the forefront of international photojournalism for more than 50 years. Throughout his career, he has produced an unrivalled body of work documenting numerous conflicts including the war in Vietnam and the Troubles in Northern Ireland.

To mark the 75th year of this remarkable photographer, more than 200 images, contact sheets, magazines and personal memorabilia are on display. This is the largest UK exhibition of McCullin's work to date. In addition to his iconic black & white images, visitors will be able to see McCullin's damaged Nikon F camera that was hit by a bullet from an AK-47 in Cambodia, and his US army helmet that he wore in Vietnam. It is the first time these items have been shown in a McCullin exhibition.

The exhibition also marks the release of two new photography books by McCullin: *Shaped by War* and *Southern Frontiers*, both published by Jonathan Cape. For more information about the books visit www.randomhouse.co.uk. The exhibition will also embark on a national tour later in the year.

Gemma Padley



Letters

Letter of the week

wins a 20-roll pack of 36-exposure Fujifilm Superia ISO 200 35mm film or a Fujifilm 4GB media card (in a choice of CompactFlash, SD or Memory Stick)*



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Brings back memories

I bought my first SLR, a Zenit B, in 1964. It had no needle/lightmeter, and the lens had to be opened up for focusing and then stopped down before taking the shot. I forgot many times and ended up with burnt-out pictures, but learned my lesson the hard and expensive way. I then bought a cheap Dixons lightmeter and with it I had an 'outfit' – my pride and joy.

With three small children, every summer we travelled around England and Scotland for three weeks in a camper van, travelling three or four hours every evening. One night in the van, I was putting another film in the camera and one of my children said, 'Oh, Mum's got the camera out – I can smell it.' Sure enough, it had a distinctive smell. I learned a lot with that completely manual camera.

Since then, other cameras have come and long gone. I have two Pentax ME Supers and a Vivitar rangefinder still in use – and, of course, I have gone digital with a Canon. Yet some of the pictures I took in the '60s are unbeatable for sharpness and quality. I used Perutz slide film because it was cheaper than many of the other brands.

So what is the point of this letter? Well, recently I was clearing out my old darkroom and found my Zenit B hanging there. As I opened the scuffed Russian boot-leather-like case, the evocative smell of the camera brought memories of those summer beaches, soaring mountains and children's laughter flooding into my mind. Photographs themselves are not the only things that bring back memories.

Catherine Wilson, Warwickshire

Playing favourites

The comparison between the Canon PowerShot G11 and Panasonic Lumix DMC-GF1 (AP 5 December) was most useful as I am looking to buy a replacement for my ageing Olympus Camedia C-5060. Although it still takes OK pictures, I can't stand the ten-second wait between exposures when shooting raw files.

The one thing the comparison did not touch on, though, is using these cameras with filters. I use a UV and (occasionally) a polariser with my Olympus camera, but there does not seem to be a filter thread on the Canon G11 and I am not a fan of the alternative methods of using filters on compacts. That swings it for me, so the Panasonic GF1 is my current favourite. I just wish it had a built-in viewfinder, as I find rear screens to be virtually useless and the clip-on electronic viewfinder looks like

something waiting to be lost. Maybe on the next update...?

Cluny MacPherson, London E11

Bricks and mortar

Andrew Redding says that if Jessops doesn't have a particular lens in stock and has to order it specially, he may as well order it online (*Letters*, AP 12 December). Well, that's certainly his prerogative. But if he wants bricks-and-mortar shops to be there when he needs them, he'd better patronise them now, *before* they disappear. Otherwise, he'll have no one to blame but himself.

Martin Topping, Worcestershire

I agree with what you say to an extent, Martin, but if bricks-and-mortar shops want to exist, they need to consider what their customers expect – Damien Demolder, Editor

A little indulgence, please

In reply to Bob Cusworth's Letter of the Week in AP 5 December, I would like to point out that you don't need to be a Leica connoisseur to appreciate the language used by lens manufacturers. Unfortunately, long gone are the days of the Skopar, Xenar, Xenon, Rokkor, Takumar, Yashinon, Tessar, Reomar, Hexanon, Planar and so on – none of which is Leitz. They each had a personality that we loved, even if they don't match today's nameless superzoom optics. My first SLR was a Pentax S1a, which I bought primarily for its Super Takumar lens – and it didn't disappoint.

The lens that was fitted to a camera became more important than the camera itself. So please, Bob, allow Roger Hicks and me a little indulgence as we browse through Wallace Heaton's *Blue Book* of the '60s.

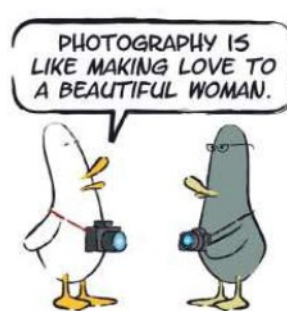
Ron Fletcher, South Yorkshire

Good cop, good cop

I recently went on a photographic day trip to London, but after reading so many recent stories of photographers being stopped by police, I did so with some trepidation. The thing I particularly wanted to achieve was a set of pictures of the superbly restored St Pancras Station. I played safe, looked at the station's website (which openly welcomed photographers), and applied for a pass, which was readily provided. With said pass in my pocket, I was able to gain access to all the platforms except Eurostar, which I had anticipated and, due to Customs regulations, was not possible. I was made most welcome by all the staff I encountered.

The main aim was to photograph the statue of Sir John Betjeman, the saviour of the fantastic glass roof in the 1950s/60s. I was busily sitting on the clean station floor taking shots of Sir John and the superb roof when I was approached by two police officers. My immediate thought was, 'I'm OK.

What The Duck



<http://www.whattheduck.net/>

Write to Letters, Amateur Photographer, IPC Media, Blue Fin Building, 110 Southwark Street, London SE1 0SU
fax to 020 3148 8130 or email to amateurphotographer@ipcmedia.com

* Please indicate whether you would like to receive Fujifilm film or a memory card (please state type preferred) and include your full postal address

Fair-weather photographer

I'm a bit of a chicken come the winter months; I really do have to psyche myself up and wrap up warm before braving the elements. Every weekend I look out of the window, hoping at least for some fluffy white clouds instead of the incessant blanket of grey, which is something I never find particularly thrilling to photograph. This narrows down my photographic options somewhat to my husband, who is a very unwilling subject, still life or my two cats.

I find it hard to resist my camera, though, and recently chose to point my lens at one of my two more willing subjects: this time it was Junior. He is not an easy model to work with as he never stays still, so my pictures are possibly not the sharpest I have ever taken, but I felt the infrared worked well, as did the light background from my conservatory, which ended up looking like a white studio background.

My New Year's resolution? To push myself to face the elements of the British winter more often... perhaps.

Catherine Feely, Conwy

I honestly think winter is a brilliant season for photography – Damien Demolder, Editor



CATHERINE FEELY

I've got a pass'. I got up and, before I could show my pass, they asked how I was getting on, and whether I would like them to take a picture of me by the statue. This they did, and I commented how good it was to get such a supportive attitude from the police, compared with the dire stories we have become so used to reading about. They explained how proud they were of the building, and how both they and the station staff were very keen to encourage photography of the splendid station they were fortunate to be involved with.

It is good to be able to report the positive side that does exist in support of photographers in the right circumstances, and to thank the staff at all levels for being so welcoming.

Michael Thorpe, Devon

You must have been visited by St Pancras himself – he's useful for headache and false witness – Damien Demolder, Editor

The untouchables

With the ongoing reports of harassment of photographers in public places, I wonder if we are going about it in the wrong – that is, the socially responsible – way.

In my local paper recently, a letter reported the experience of a married couple at a major supermarket at around 10pm. In the foyer, 'There were half a dozen young lads with cans of drink shouting and rolling around, some rolling on the floor, some playing in the photo booth, one tied up with a carrier bag over his head. They were also kicking a football.'

A security guard was standing just inside the store. His response to the situation was, 'You can't use force on them'.

So, if you want to take photographs in public, perhaps you should become one of the untouchables.

Harold Gough, Berkshire

Back Chat

Is photographing in public turning into a new kind of pantomime, asks AP reader **Matthew Hunt**

LAST month I went to Somerset House in London to see its seasonal ice rink. My wife had taken some of her overseas students there and I'd wandered along thinking they might like a few pictures of them on the ice. Pulling out my Nikon D700, I took a few frames and then walked over to take a group picture.

A security man enters: You can't use that (points to camera).

Me (thinking this is about terrorism or paedophilia): Under what regulation or bylaw, please?

Security man: What? You can't use professional cameras.

Me (realising we're probably on commercial grounds): Why not? There are hundreds of cameras here?

Security man: But those cameras are not professional.

Me: Just because one buys a DSLR does not make them a professional. Many of the compact cameras here will take a comparable image for what I am using it for.

Security man: But you might sell it. You have to go and sign a form to say you are not a professional.

Me: I'm here taking pictures for myself.

At this point my wife joins in, so the man from security reverted to Plan B.

“Just because one buys a DSLR does not make them a professional. Many compacts will take a comparable image”

Security man: You can't use a lens longer than 30mm.

Me: Do you realise that many of the compacts here have a zoom lens?

Security man: You have to sign a disclaimer.

At this point my wife applied common sense and suggested I set the lens to less than 30mm, take the

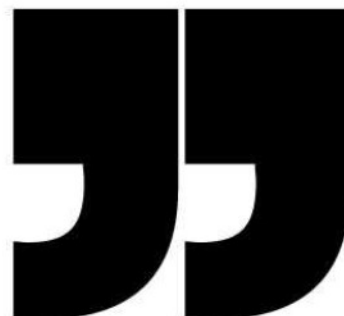
desired group photo and then show the security man the picture, along with the Exif data, so he'd know I'd used the correct focal length and not sneaked a in picture of Somerset House.

We were told we could not do this because it was a 'big' lens. So if I had a 24-70mm lens with an aperture of f/3.5-5.6, for example, it would have been OK, but a constant f/2.8 is some devilish thing? At this point my wife asked me why this was happening. I told her that it was due to the spread of ignorance and went to get the form signed.

Sadly, this was not the end. The man in the office knew nothing about forms, while the manager seemed surprised when I pointed out that to photograph the centre of Somerset House a lens of 30mm or wider would be more suitable. I was told they'd seen too many unauthorised images appear on biscuit tins and the like.

Do not misunderstand me.

I fully understand that Somerset House Inc can control who photographs its private property and that unauthorised commercial gain must be galling. But, please, Father Christmas, can the rules be more sensible? Maybe they could ask a photographer?



Your thoughts or views (about 500 words) should be sent to 'Backchat' at the usual AP address (see page 3). A fee of £50 will be paid on publication



Photo Insight

DAVID CLAPP

VENTURES INTO THE WILD TO REALISE HIS DREAM OF PHOTOGRAPHING A PROPER BRITISH WINTER

EARLY in 2009, I lived a simple and unlikely dream: to photograph a proper winter in Devon. As Britain ground to a standstill in the February blizzards, a countrywide community spirit was fully restored. The news reported three million man hours lost every day, no one cared and the happy-o-meter literally went off the scale. Children abandoned their games consoles and shrieked with glee as they sledged for the very first time, their parents joining them for the first time in 18 years. The mischievous teenage snowball assassins were back, pummelling passing windscreens, dog walkers and each other. When the night came it brought the return of an unseen stillness and tranquillity long forgotten in our modern world. Crisp air was mixed with the unmistakable smell of coal fires. Wellies on the doorstep, a homely curtain glow and a fuzzy sentimental feeling were back. It was a proper winter – and what relief.

The climb to Dartmoor was filled with traffic jams, caused by unprepared motorists and abandoned cars. Haytor was impassable, as

The AP experts

Each week, one of our team of experts of Steve Bloom, David Clapp, Tom Mackie and Clive Nichols will reveal the secrets behind one of their great images. This week it's David Clapp

DAVID CLAPP Landscape
Our landscape and travel expert. Based in glorious south Devon, David is represented by seven stock agencies worldwide



thick, fresh snow had turned the car park into a trap and anyone with a four-by-four was now the unofficial fourth emergency service. I bailed my car on a verge, and checked that I had everything I needed in my camera bag – Canon EOS-1Ds Mark III, 14–24mm, 35–70mm and 70–200mm lenses, polarisers, kitchen roll and huge Gitzo tripod. I then strode off towards the 'alpine' slopes. The hillside was full of sledgers, skiers, snowboarders and children whooping with joy; even a man in a kayak was 'paddling' his way down the rapids and we all stood by applauding his eccentric British humour.

Spindrift was blasted across the landscape at 40mph, and after a few shots of the fun and games I made my way towards the desolate summit. Every step was heavy and unbalanced, but as I glanced across the transformed landscape through the slit between my hat and scarf, I knew where I was subconsciously heading: Saddle Tor.

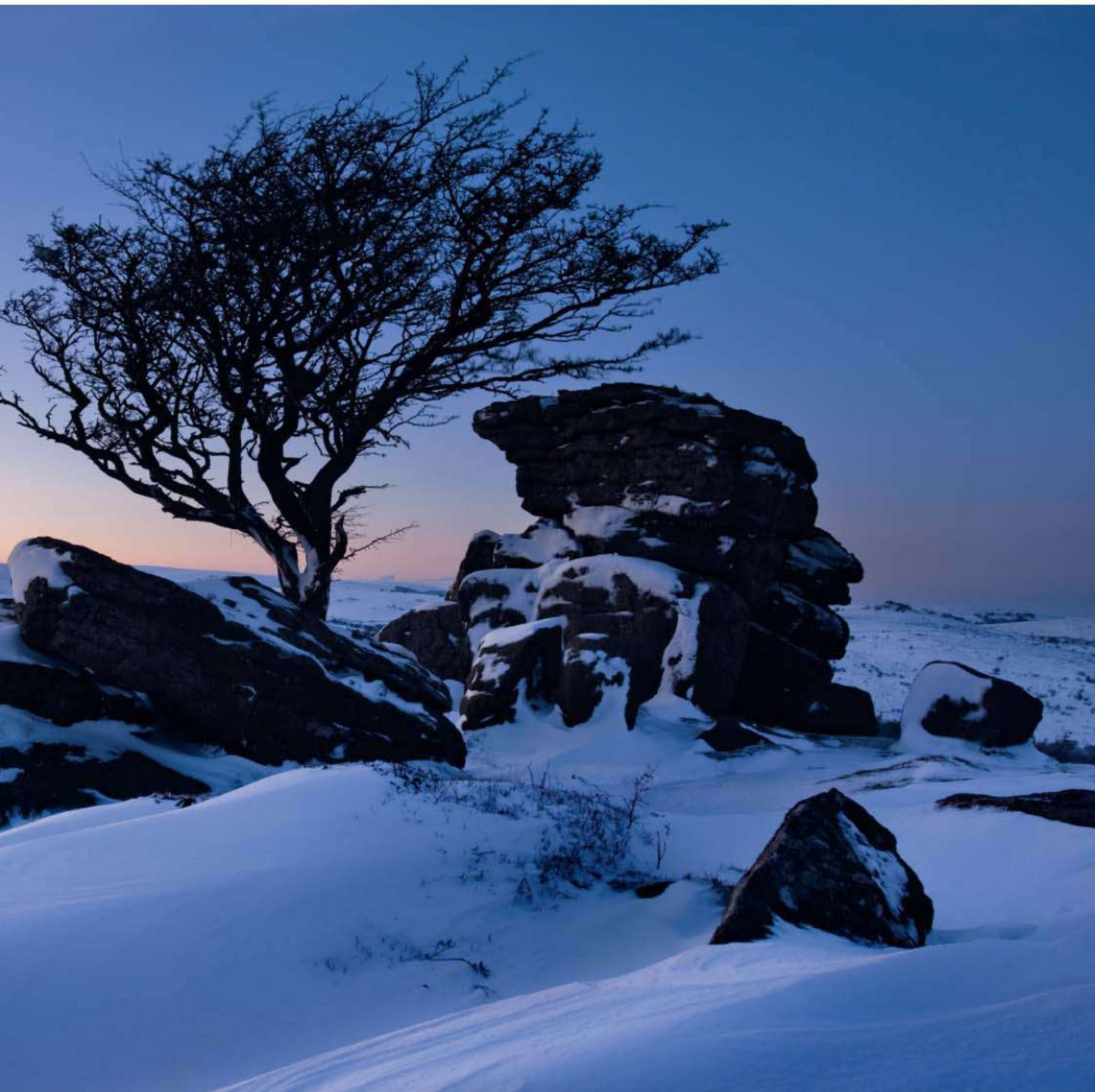
This image is a beautiful pairing of classic Dartmoor elements. A windswept hawthorn and an almost face-like granite profile would be



drenched in evening gold. It's usually only a short, brisk walk, but in these conditions I had no idea how long it would take – and I didn't care! This was to be revelled in.

Ten minutes later, though, I was far from revelling. The snow in the valley was waist deep. With all bushes and rocks engulfed, there was no chance of finding the path, and after falling over repeatedly, a better idea was borne of frustration. Fully extending a tripod leg, I turned the Gitzo into a biblical staff, just like I do for crossing rivers. By standing on gorse bushes

“After half an hour of wading through the thick of it I was still nowhere near my chosen venue”



my pace began to speed up, yet after half an hour of wading through the thick of it I was still nowhere near my chosen venue.

Amusement turned to agitation, and as I started to overheat it suddenly dawned on me: for the first time I was in a true wilderness, desperate and abandoned. This was a face-stinging slice of backyard polar exploration, but unlike all polar explorers I was completely unprepared. I had no food, no water and had headed for an hour into nowhere, without anyone knowing

where I was or where I was going. How very clever.

Blasts of light were teasing and quickening my sluggish pace, but as the sun hit a raft of cloud I knew it was game over. The sun departed and my concept had flown with it. No golden side lighting, just a blank sky, whistling wind and emptiness. I arrived at the tor in half-light, not twilight, and shot a few frames. The pictures looked like daytime and the colours pale. I sat, ate snow, sent a text and waited, just like I do at the coast. With the EOS-1Ds Mark III and 14-24mm lens set to

24mm, f/11, it was simply a case of waiting for peak sky saturation. I had no idea what was about to happen next – as the landscape began to turn blue.

Reflecting the richness of the clear sky above, the foreground snow almost turned into blue yoghurt. The tree was rattling in the strong wind, so I set the camera to ISO 400 to give me a shutter speed of 1/10sec, dropping the aperture to f/8 in an attempt to induce some tranquillity and maintain depth of field in this icy gale.

The next morning my good friends Mark and Glenn had driven their 4x4

to Saddle Tor to shoot their dawn take on the winter scene. From a neighbouring viewpoint, Mark said he could see 'an erratic zigzag line' that I had left as I stumbled back. I fell into a bog half way, plastering myself in mud as I staggered for another full hour. With a rising full moon to light the way and a soft cereal bar I found in my jacket to eat, I was lucky I didn't turn this first true wilderness experience into my very last. **AP**

To see more pictures by **David Clapp** visit www.davidclapp.co.uk

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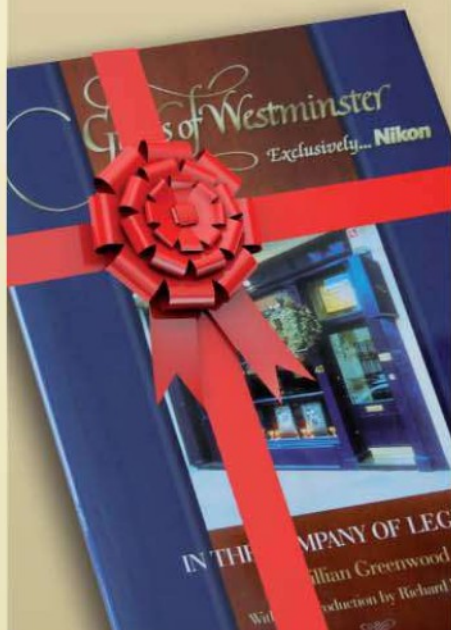
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The seven day event at London's Novotel, Hammersmith starts on January 12, 2010. One hundred and fifty speakers have been booked, including 'international imaging heavyweights' Jerry Ghionis, Kevin Kubota (below), Charlie Waite, Mark Cleghorn, Henk Van Kooten, Doug Gordon and Trevor and Faye Yerbury.



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The 3 day Trade Photo Show runs from January 15-17 with around two hundred imaging industry exhibitors. Phil Jones, The Societies' CEO said: "The final countdown to the biggest event of its kind ever in Europe has begun. Despite the recession, interest in the 2010 The Societies Convention is keener than ever. Over 12,000 visitors attended the 2009 event but all the signs from pre-registrations are that figure will be easily overtaken this January."

He added: "We are finding that increasing numbers of photographers are treating The Societies Convention as a 'must-do' event. They know the choice of seminars and workshops by world-acclaimed speakers is simply unmatched – and they also know that all the key players in the industry will be on hand to demonstrate their latest products."



The Societies director Juliet Jones said: "We have planned over 350 hours of Masterclasses over four days; over 12 hours of exclusive Business School workshops and over forty hours of free seminars and demonstrations. ...and the Trade Show element of the Convention (Jan 15-17) is free as long as visitors pre-register online at www.swpp.co.uk/convention up till 8pm on January 8, and they will also receive a **FREE** 196 page show guide".

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The AP expert...

Paul Hobson

Paul, who is based in Sheffield, studied environmental science at Sheffield University and has worked as an environmental sciences lecturer for 25 years. With more than 20 years' photography experience behind him, Paul became a full-time professional wildlife photographer in 2009. He was specially commended in the 2008 Wildlife Photographer of the Year competition and two of his images were exhibition finalists in the British Wildlife Photography Awards 2009. Paul regularly lectures on wildlife photography and also runs workshops. To see more images by Paul visit www.paulhobson.co.uk.

Paul Hobson Masterclass Wildlife

New
series

In the first part of our brand new Masterclass series, members of Welshpool Camera Club join wildlife photographer **Paul Hobson** to capture red kites at Gigrin Farm in Powys. **Gemma Padley** reports

SLICING through the sky at breakneck speed, red kites are a phenomenal sight to behold. If you have ever spotted a single red kite darting through the countryside you will appreciate just how majestic these birds can be, but en masse they are simply breathtaking. Not a word to be used lightly, the sight of hundreds of kites swerving and stooping is nothing but inspirational. From a photographic point of view, there are many opportunities to create brilliant images. To kick-start our new series, we invited five members of Welshpool Camera Club to Gigrin Farm to photograph these majestic birds on the wing.

On a bright and crisp, if slightly drizzly winter morning, Paul met the photographers in the education centre at the farm. Each photographer had brought his or her own camera and a selection of wideangle and telephoto lenses, plus tripods, although Paul recommended shooting handheld to keep up with the fast-moving kites. The photographers had the opportunity to use a Samsung GX-20 with a 50-200mm zoom lens if they wished, and the photographer who took the day's strongest image, as judged by Paul, would win a Samsung GX-20 to take home.

Gigrin Farm's owner Chris Powell

The curving shape of the bird and its direct, fierce stare create a powerful sense of drama in John's image



The readers

Five members of Welshpool Camera Club (www.welshpoolcameraclub.org.uk) joined Paul for the day to learn how to photograph birds in flight. They were...

Colin King



Colin, 62, has been Welshpool Camera Club's chairman and club secretary for the past three years. He started photography while studying at university. Colin is a keen bird photographer and enjoys taking pictures of birds in his garden. He says: 'Before today my approach was to point and shoot, but Paul's tuition has been very useful.'

Rachel Taylor



Rachel, 43, who is self-employed, learnt the fundamentals of photography from magazines, including *Amateur Photographer*. Rachel bought her first DSLR camera earlier this year and joined Welshpool Camera Club in the autumn of 2009. Rachel says: 'Today has been a great experience. I was excited but apprehensive before I arrived, but with Paul's advice I started to relax.'

John Evans



John, 60, has been a keen photographer for more than 30 years. A stalwart member of Welshpool CC, he left the club for a while but rejoined three years ago. Now retired, John especially enjoys wildlife and portrait photography. He says: 'I'd like to come back to Gigrin and put Paul's advice into practice.'

Mike Padden



Mike, 60, started taking pictures when he was a teenager. Having dipped in and out of photography throughout his life, Mike got back into image-making seriously five years ago. He says: 'I was hoping to go away with lots of advice about how to approach photographing kites, and I have. I've learnt to consider my compositions and think about ways of creating images that are unique.'

Adam Cusack



Adam started taking photos five years ago and joined Welshpool CC in 2008. He enjoys taking candid street shots and has also dabbled in wildlife photography. Adam says: 'Today has encouraged me to think carefully about the camera settings I'm using and adjust my photographic approach depending on the situation I am in.'



Gigrin Farm

Situated in the heart of Powys in mid-Wales, Gigrin Farm is a family-run sheep farm that stretches for about 200 acres. Owned by Chris and Lena Powell, Gigrin became the official red kite feeding station in 1992. It is also the red kite rehabilitation centre for the Welsh Kite Trust. Members of the public can watch the kites being fed at the farm every day (except Christmas day) at 2pm, and the number of birds varies from a few dozen to more than 400 depending on the time of year. There are seven hides, including two photography hides that can be booked in advance. Gigrin Farm, South Street, Rhayader, Powys LD6 5BL. Tel: 01597 810 243. Website: www.gigrin.co.uk. Prices: adults £4, OAPs £3, children £1.50.



Paul converted John's image of the kites against the sky to black & white to add impact



had reserved us the Tower Hide, which stands approximately 7ft (around 2.1m) off the ground and overlooks the main feeding area, so after a short introduction Paul and the photographers headed off to begin the shoot.

Getting the kites in focus

Photographers face a number of challenges when photographing red kites. The first is to produce an in-focus image. 'Photographing birds in flight is challenging because they are constantly moving, but kites are not as fast as some other birds,' says Paul. 'If the bird is in the sky and there is nothing behind it, I suggest using predictive or continuous autofocus and switch on all the AF sensors. Even if the bird moves off the central point, one of the other focus sensors is likely to lock onto the bird. However, if there are hills or trees behind the kite, the camera's focus may jump to the background so it's best to use the central AF sensor in these situations.'

Metering and exposure

One of the other challenges the photographers faced was ensuring the image was correctly exposed. To avoid the camera underexposing the image, Paul offered some advice. 'If the sky is bright and grey you may need to overexpose slightly to compensate,' says Paul. 'You can adjust the exposure afterwards (see right), but try to get it right in-camera first. I advise using evaluative metering. Look at the sky, set your exposure and take a couple of preliminary



shots to check that the image is correctly exposed. Then under or overexpose as necessary. Repeat this process until you have an exposure you're happy with, and if the sun comes out you can review your exposure. A common mistake is to compensate for one situation but forget to alter this when the light changes, so make sure you keep an eye on the brightness of the sky and think about how this is affecting your exposure.'

Paul recommended working in aperture priority mode and setting the widest aperture the



**Amateur
Photographer**
Picture of
the day

Paul chose Rachel's image as his picture of the day because of the kite's angelic pose and the exquisite use of light underneath the wings

Original



Edited

If an image is underexposed

Adam's image is compositionally strong, but a little underexposed. Paul explains how he lightened the bird and brought out detail in the wings to make it even better

I opened the image in Photoshop and selected Image>Adjustments>Brightness/Contrast. Using the Brightness slider, I increased the overall lightness of the image. I used Levels (Image>Adjustments>Levels) to alter the contrast, and by sliding the central point of the graph to the left I could subtly lighten the dark areas. To bring out detail in the wings I used the Shadows and Highlights feature (Image>Adjustments>Shadows/

Highlights), setting the sliders to 20% Shadows and 5% Highlights. Too much Shadows adjustment creates noise, while adjusting the Highlights too much creates a halo effect around the bird, so I was subtle in my approach. I boosted the contrast slightly (Image>Adjustments>Brightness/Contrast) by shifting the contrast slider slightly to the left. Next I applied an Unsharp Mask set to 120% (Filter>Sharpen>Unsharp Mask). To reduce the amount of noise in the sky, I used the Magic Wand tool to select the sky and the Dust and Scratches command (Filter>Noise>Dust & Scratches) set to 2%. There was still noise on the bird so I used the Reduce Noise function (Filter>Noise>Reduce Noise), setting the Sharpen Details slider to a low value.

“A common mistake is to compensate for one situation and forget to alter this when the light changes”

1/250sec



1/15sec



In his wider angle images of the kites, John photographed the same scene using a fast shutter speed (left) and a much slower shutter speed (right). Using a considerably slower shutter speed allowed John to blur the birds and create a more abstract composition

Editing your composition

Paul explains how he added extra canvas to Rachel's image

When photographing birds, there will be times when your subject isn't where you want it to be in the frame. Adding extra canvas is an easy way to rectify this. The technique is most effective if the background is fairly uniform, such as a blue sky. Some may argue this approach takes image manipulation too far, but in my view it does not affect the authenticity of what happened at the time of shooting.

Original

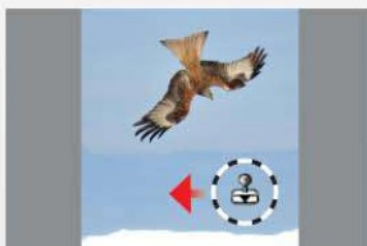
Edited



1 Crop the image in Photoshop to get rid of any distracting details. Select Image>Image Size and resize the image to 15cm wide. Under the Select dropdown menu click 'All' and select Edit>Copy. Close the original file without saving the changes.



2 Next, create a blank canvas by selecting File>New (2480x3508 pixels) and paste the image on the blank canvas (Edit>Paste). If you want to drag the image to another part of the canvas select Edit>Free Transform. Once you are happy, flatten the image (Layers>Flatten Image).



3 To create extra sky around the bird, use the Clone tool set to a fairly large size (approximately 150) and select the area of sky you want to copy by pressing the Alt key.



4 Crop the image to the size and composition you want. Use the Healing Brush tool set to a reasonable size to blend any joining lines together and paint over blemishes. Rename and save the image.



photographers' lenses would allow. 'You want to aim for a shutter speed of at least 1/500sec to freeze the bird in motion,' says Paul. 'Your images may be blurred if you use shutter speeds a lot slower than this, such as 1/50sec, so keep an eye on your shutter speed. If your widest aperture gives a shutter speed that is too slow, increase your ISO setting to allow a faster shutter speed.'

Mike used a shutter speed of 1/15sec to blur the movement of the kite and create this unusual image



Paul's image shows the effects you can create when using a slow shutter speed to track the kites. By setting a shutter speed of 1/50sec and focusing on the bird's eye while panning, Paul has blurred the movement of the wings but kept the eye razor-sharp



Composition

Apart from the fundamental technical considerations, there was the small matter of composition to think about. Paul reminded the photographers of the Rule of Thirds and how they could apply this to their bird photography.

'Subjects look more attractive to the eye if they are placed in a third of the frame,' says Paul. 'Try to place the bird so it is flying into, rather than flying out of the frame and make sure you leave enough space around your subject. Try to think about where the bird is in the frame when you are shooting, but remember you can always tweak your composition afterwards (see left).'

Paul demonstrated how to pan with the bird and told the photographers to be aware that although it is easier to pan when the bird is large in the frame, any blur is magnified.

'If you are using a telephoto zoom, stick to a focal length so you are not constantly zooming in and out,' says Paul. 'Track the birds as they fly close and fire the shutter when the bird is the size you want it to be. Be aware of the tips of tails and wings, and try to make sure these parts of the bird



Some of the photographers used the moon to create imaginative images, as Mike has done here

are well inside the frame. Don't pause to contemplate whether or not to take a shot: if you think your composition works, take the shot, as you can always delete image later. The more shots you take, the better chance you have of success. Even if you're not firing the shutter, keep panning with the bird to practise your technique.'

Getting creative with your composition

Paul also explained how the photographers could create more artistic and abstract compositions by using slow shutter speeds to blur movement.

'If you drop your shutter speed to 1/50sec or longer by either using a smaller aperture or reducing your ISO setting and pan with

the bird, you can capture the movement in the wings,' he says. 'This works well when the birds are flying past trees or greenery, although there is an element of luck.' Paul also advised taking advantage of opportunities as they arose. At one point, the moon appeared in the sky and the photographers seized the opportunity to capture some atmospheric images.

Throughout the afternoon the sun appeared and disappeared behind the clouds. 'Take advantage of the sun by tracking a single bird and try to capture the light as it illuminates the wings,' says Paul. 'Try a few wider angle shots, too, to show the birds in their environment.'

After an intensive couple of hours spent photographing, the photographers finally laid down their cameras. The cavorting kites had tested the stamina and technical abilities of the photographers, but with hundreds of exposures locked away on copious memory cards Paul was certain they had nailed some good shots. **AP**



Special thanks to **Chris** and **Lena Powell** and the staff at **Giggin Farm**

The foreground kite in Colin's image is perfectly sharp, with the blurred trees and kite in the background playing a supporting role



Don't miss out. Enter now!

If you would like to take part, send a letter, including your age, photographic interests, daytime phone number and address, to: Reader Masterclass, Amateur Photographer, IPC Media, 9th floor, Blue Fin Building, 110 Southwark Street, London SE1 0SU or email us at amateurphotographer@ipcmedia.com.

Reader Masterclass As you can see from this issue, our Reader Masterclass series has taken on a new format. Every month we will invite up to five AP readers to join one of our experts on an assignment over the course of a day. The experts are Lee Frost (landscapes), Brett Harkness (portraiture), Paul Hobson (wildlife) and Clive Nichols (gardens). Paul has launched the series in this issue with his first Wildlife Masterclass and will also appear in May and September. Lee will appear in February, June and October, Brett in March, July and November, with Clive in April, August and December. If you would like to take part, contact us at the address below. Each participant will be able to use his or own camera, lenses and other equipment.

Thanks to Samsung for providing all the readers taking part this month with a Samsung GX-20 kit and Samsung SD memory card. The Samsung GX-20 is a 14MP DSLR with advanced features, great handling and high image quality, aimed at the enthusiast photographer. Visit www.samsungcamera.co.uk. AP test score 85% (24 May 2008).



The white stuff

If you want to capture freshly fallen snow before it's been trampled on, stick close to home, says **Craig Roberts**, as he shares his techniques for working in largely white landscapes

PULL back the curtains on a cold winter's morning and the thought of going back to a warm bed will seem a very attractive option. However, if snow has fallen overnight, you might instead want to get your camera bag for an early start at capturing a pristine winter wonderland. We don't get that much snow in the UK these days, so when it does appear you need to make the most of it.

If the weather forecast is predicting snow, or if the temperature has dropped below freezing, you'll need to get yourself ready the night before so you can leave at a moment's notice at dawn. You obviously

need to pack your equipment and enough clothing to keep yourself warm, but you also want to make a plan of where to go.

When shooting in snow and ice, it's best if you don't have to travel too far. Apart from the icy conditions, you also don't have long before humans, vehicles and animals disturb the pristine snow left on benches, fences and roads, not to mention the white blankets covering the parks and lawns. This is why I have a few local haunts I like to frequent. Staying local gives you more time and allows you to become familiar with the dazzling subject matter. The beauty of this kind of weather is that a sprinkling of

snow or ground frost transforms even the most mundane subjects or locations into wonderful viewpoints. Therefore, shooting a familiar location that you perhaps shot in spring or summer will make a good contrast to the original.

If you can't think of any local subjects and really want to explore, your nearest scenic village is another good choice for location, as snow and cottages always go well together, as do village churches. You may think these are a little corny, but this is why they work well. However, great images don't come simply by pressing your shutter. Dazzling





Use a telephoto lens
to isolate interesting
abstract compositions
Canon EOS 5D,
70-200mm

Right: Even when it isn't a beautiful sunny morning, you can still find interesting images in your home town
Canon EOS 5D,
70–200mm

Below: This bright red bench in a local park adds a splash of colour to the otherwise bleak conditions
Canon EOS 5D,
70–200mm

displays of wintry snow and ice come with their own unique set of obstacles, for which you'll need to refine your usual methods.

Exposure

There are several ways to achieve correct exposure with the predominately white scenes associated with winter shooting. The first is to compensate your camera's metering. By default, your camera's integral metering wants to record everything as a mid-grey colour. Therefore, your crisp, white snow scenes will be underexposed and look drab and too dark. This can happen whether you are using centreweighted metering or sophisticated matrix metering to work out your exposures. To compensate for this, you need to overexpose the scene by 1½–2 stops. You can do this by setting this amount on the exposure compensation dial or by switching to manual and setting either the shutter speed or aperture over what the camera's reading in the viewfinder is suggesting. So, if it reads 1/125sec at f/16, then you should set the shutter speed to 1/30sec at f/16 or 1/125sec at f/8. Both ways will give 2 stops extra exposure and this will clean up the whites and show the snow as it is meant to look.

A second way of achieving correct exposure is to use a separate handheld meter. This



“A blue sky and bright sunshine are the perfect combination to make the most of a layer of snow”

takes an incident light reading to measure light, as opposed to reflected, as the camera's own meter does. As it isn't influenced by the light bouncing off the white snow, it should give an accurate reading every time. You can also take a reading off a small piece of mid-grey card (with 18% reflectance) held at arm's

length, in the same light as your main scene. This achieves the same incident light reading, giving a more accurate exposure.

Lens choice

Zoom lenses are an ideal choice in these conditions, as you don't want to keep



Potential subjects

Your local park will provide lots of opportunities for shots as there will be plenty of trees covered in snow, which make good abstracts, and leaves on the ground for close-ups. Even the park bench or children's playground can throw up some interesting abstracts as the snow wraps itself around the metal bars.

Look out for everyday objects that stand out in these conditions, which you would otherwise ignore. A red bench, for instance, covered with snow, will look great and adds a welcome splash of colour to a shot. If you got up early before heading off to work or have the day off, don't forget to capture other people heading out in the wintry conditions. If it is still snowing outside, showing the bleak conditions or kids enjoying the snow can be another way of capturing the effects of a winter's day. People sledging at the local park can provide some great action images, too

changing lenses in the cold. A couple of zooms are perfect, so you have one to cover wide-to-standard focal lengths for overall scenes, and a mid-to-long telephoto for isolating details. If you have an ultra-zoom lens, covering focal lengths from very wide to long telephoto, you won't have to change lenses at all and be ready for all situations.

A blue sky and bright sunshine are the perfect combination to make the most of fresh snow. Watch out for the sun, though, which will be much lower in the sky at this time of year and can lead to flare. To avoid this, use a lens hood at all times or shield the lens with your hand when taking a picture. If it's an overcast day, however, don't despair. In these conditions, it's worth ignoring the wider view to concentrate more on the smaller details within the landscape, such as close-ups on the ground and flowers covered in frost.

Take precautions

Once your shoot is over, remember to take precautions when you get home. First remove the film or cards from your camera and leave your gear in the bag for an hour or two to avoid condensation. When you finally check your images, you'll be glad you made the most of the cold snap and no doubt will have some rewarding images that were worth getting out of bed for. **AP**

Right: This image was almost monochrome in appearance, so I changed it to black & white to make the most of the contrasting tones

Canon EOS 5D,
70–200mm,
1/250sec at f/11,
ISO 400



Use a polariser

A polariser is ideal for taking your winter shots, as it reduces glare from the bright snow and adds a rich colour to any blue sky. This adds extra contrast to a scene and gives the image extra punch. It also helps when photographing frozen water or icicles, again by reducing any glare and reflections, making the main subjects stand out more. Mamiya RZ67, 90mm, 1/8sec at f/22, Fujichrome Velvia, polariser +81b



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Jürgen Warschun
Devon

Lizard... 1

Shooting from a low angle to make the lizard loom large in the frame, Jürgen has captured its imposing, authoritative air
Sony Alpha 350, 135mm lens with 11mm, 20mm and 30mm extension tubes, 1/8sec at f/16, ISO 400



Jürgen Warschun

Devon

Jürgen's images were last featured in *Gallery* in AP 4 July 2009. For this submission, Jürgen, 48, selected more images from a recent trip to the Dominican Republic. While he enjoys shooting landscapes, Jürgen admits he needs to spend more time 'chasing the light' and is happier arranging his compositions rather than purely reacting to a scene. Still shooting film from time to time, Jürgen switched to digital imaging in 2007. He says he is inspired by readers' and professional photographers' images published in AP and hopes to submit images to this year's APOY competition.

Lizard... 2

1 Using the macro setting on his lens and a shallow depth of field, Jürgen creates a tightly framed composition with impact

Sony Alpha 350,
75-300mm, 1/500sec
at f/13, ISO 320

Flower detail

2 Jürgen took a series of test shots to make sure his image wouldn't be overexposed

Sony Alpha 350, 58mm
lens with 11mm, 20mm
and 30mm extension
tubes, 1/250sec at f/16,
ISO 100





Keith Taylor Cambridge

Keith, 36, became interested in photography at the age of ten when he was given a camera as a Christmas present, and switched to digital imaging in 2006. Keith enjoys photographing landscapes and seascapes, and says his favourite locations are the Lake District and Scotland. His aim is to visit more locations and to continue to enjoy taking photographs. To see more images by Keith, visit www.marona.co.uk.

Embleton Bay

1 Keith used a 10-stop ND filter to blur the sea in this early evening shot
Canon EOS 5D, 17-40mm, 59secs at f/11, ISO 100, tripod

Low Newton

2 Keith successfully combines soft light and strong foreground interest
Canon EOS 5D, 17-40mm, 25secs at f/16, ISO 100, 0.9 ND and 0.6 grad filters, tripod

Embleton Bay

3 An early morning shot looking towards Dunstanburgh Castle
Canon EOS 5D, 28-75mm, 15secs at f/11, ISO 100, ND grad filter, tripod





1



This is a most unusual photograph of a butterfly, and one that really stands out from the crowd. Either by luck or judgement, Rachel has found background colours that work brilliantly – emphasising the orange/brown of the wings as well as contrasting with the colourless body of the insect. The texture of the peel makes a fantastic base for the subject and the overall impression is of a fun surrealism. A very appealing image – Damien Demolder, Editor



Rachel Slater Cambridgeshire

Rachel was given her first camera at the age of six. Now 34, she says: 'I would study my parents' photo albums for hours as a child, particularly the landscape images. Rachel enjoys photographing in Scotland, Wales and along the Norfolk and Suffolk coasts, and says her favourite subjects are landscapes and nature. She also enjoys macro photography.

Glasswing butterfly

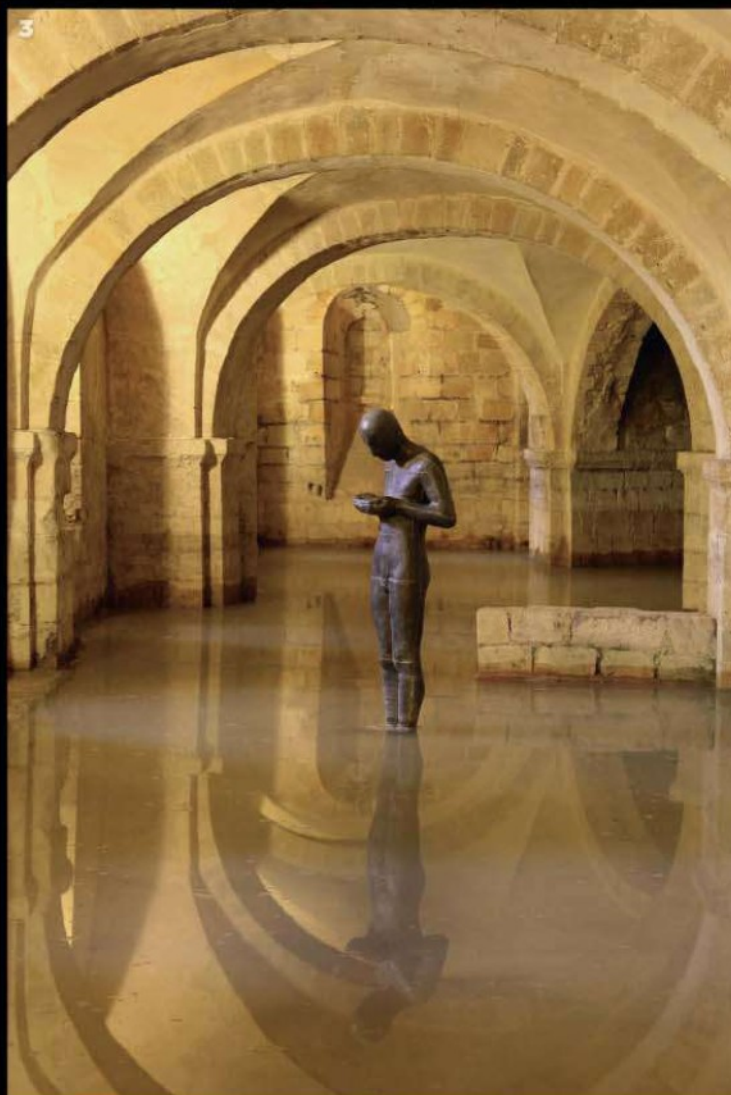
1 The macro lens reveals texture in the orange peel and delicate patterns on the butterfly's wings
Nikon D40, 60mm macro, ISO 800

Jetty and lake

2 Rachel took this peaceful image at Llyn y Dywarchen in Snowdonia, North Wales
Nikon D300, 16-84mm, ISO 200

Figure

3 A perfect reflection of a sculpture from Antony Gormley's Sound II project, installed in a crypt in Winchester Cathedral in 1986. Rachel took this shot when the crypt had flooded
Canon EOS 350D, 17-70mm, ISO 800



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Appraisal

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Send your photographs to 'Appraisal' at our usual address (see page 3). Please enclose an SAE if you would like them returned.

“ We have cold, neutral and warm tones in the image, which is nice, as people are often so desperate to neutralise everything ”

Statue

John Boyle

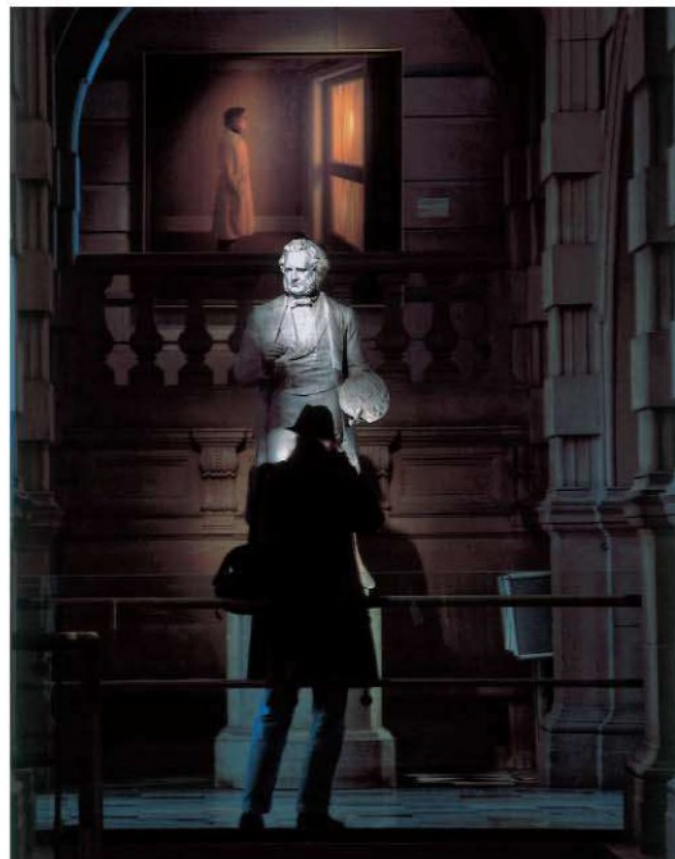
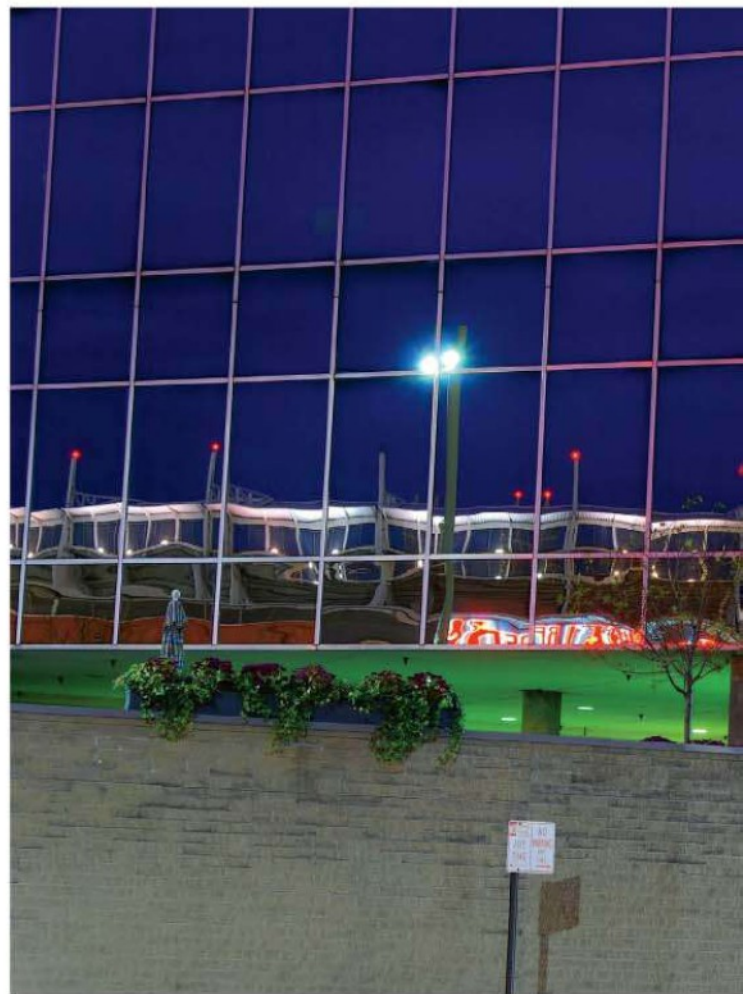
Canon PowerShot A710 IS,
1/13sec at f/4.8

John originally entered this picture (below right) for the Low Light round of Amateur Photographer of the Year 2009. In it he has employed a repeating theme technique, capturing three figures in a line. The first is obviously the person taking the picture of the statue, but then there is the statue itself and a painting of another person, presumably painted by the man depicted by the statue.

It was the mix of lighting that drew my attention. John would have set his white balance to tungsten to get that neutral result on the statue, and it has worked very well. I think there is some daylight entering through a window to the left of the frame, and this has given the image a nice blue tone, yet the painting, which must also be lit with some sort of tungsten lighting, is a warm tone. We therefore have cold, neutral and warm tones in the image, which is nice, as people are often so desperate to neutralise everything that they lose the atmosphere with the colour. By neutralising only the light on the statue using his tungsten white balance, John has allowed other, cooler and warmer tones to show through.

The composition has us looking at the scene through an archway, but because the arch has not been captured intact it leaves me wondering where that slope in the top-left corner is going. I would have preferred it if I could see the top of the arch. Perhaps if John had used a longer lens and stepped back, he could still have caught the same scene but also the arch in its entirety. The pillars on either side are certainly very impressive and really add to the image.

Finally, it's disappointing that so much of the statue is blocked from view. If the man had stood a little further to the right this would have been avoided, as well as giving us a nice line of figures right through the picture. Of course, it's often not possible to control these things when you're shooting street pictures; you just have to wait for someone to come along at the right time and stand in the right place, but these people can be few and far between. That is really all you can do.



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The Great American Ball Park Fredrik Froman

Nikon D80, 18-200mm, 20secs at f/8, ISO 100, tripod

Fredrik says his favourite location is Cincinnati in the USA, which is handy as he lives there. He's taken lots of pictures of the city at night, although he doesn't let it get completely dark. This picture shows the Great American Ball Park reflected in an office building. We see lots of shots of reflections in glass buildings and often we'll see old buildings reflected in the windows of their newer neighbours, creating interesting contrasts. Here, though, it is not a typical building; it's a sports stadium.

I like the contrast between the plain brick wall at the bottom of the frame and the rigid grid of lines that frame the windows. Mixed into this is a higgledy-piggledy reflection of the stadium's strange structure, which gives us two very different pictures in one: the organised structure of the main building and wall, and the wobbly reflection of the stadium. It is Fredrik's inclusion of the brick wall

and road sign at the bottom, with its overhanging plants, that sets this shot apart. It establishes that this scene is just a normal city street.

I also like the fact that Fredrik has included a bit of another angle of the building on the right-hand side of the frame. The incredible greens underneath the building, probably caused by fluorescent lighting, go extremely well with the O blue of the 'not-quite-night' sky. Considering Fredrik set his camera to auto white balance, he's been very lucky to get such great colours.

It's a great picture that makes you look again and again, and it's difficult to get used to the fact that you're looking at such a complete mess within a very strict organisation. I think the contrast works brilliantly, and that's why this is my picture of the week.

“The incredible greens underneath the building go extremely well with the purply blue sky”

Sunglasses Tony Rostron

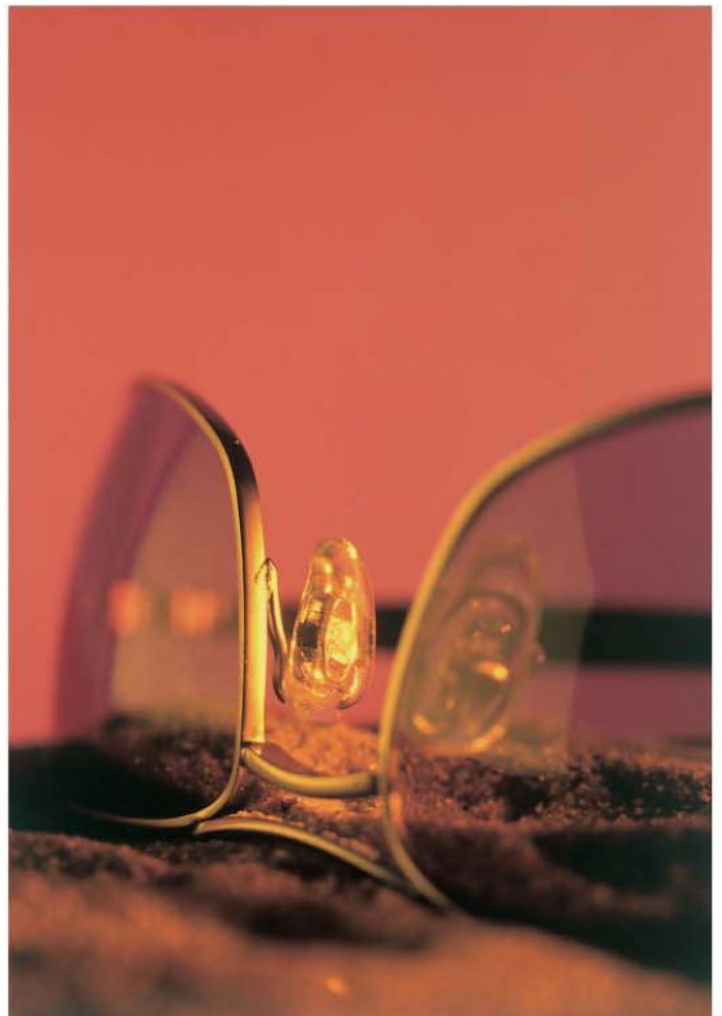
Nikon FE, 50mm

Tony has created a very simple-looking picture of a pair of sunglasses upturned on a towel. I say simple, but what I really mean is minimalist, as there's nothing simple about it. Anyone can put a pair of sunglasses down and take a photo, but it takes some skill to turn that picture into a convincing still life. When the only thing in your frame is a pair of sunglasses, you have to put in twice as much effort to make it work as there's no extra interest to back up your main subject.

What you're looking to do is create a sense of atmosphere through clever composition and nice lighting. Tony's picture is unusual because it is entirely orange, probably from the use of a filter over the lens. It's a nice idea and it works well, it's just that if you look at adverts for sunglasses you will see that the photographers and art directors have spent a lot of time concentrating on what is reflected in the glass. In the studio, a photographer would typically set up a whole range of black panels and things to really control the light, and the reflections in the glass.

The composition of this shot is great. It's unusual in that Tony has cut into the right-hand lens, and the focus is nicely on the rim of the furthest lens. However, it is distracting that a white wall or something similar is being reflected in the surface of the glass. It takes our eye away and suggests the studio rather than a natural environment. What Tony needs to do is use either a big black reflector close to his subject so that it fills the area shown in the glass, or put the sunglasses into a real-world situation so that any reflections show something appropriate: a beach scene, or something associated with wearing sunglasses. It's a really good effort, but it's just unfortunate there's no way of getting round the fact that the reflection shows a large white wall.

“When the only thing in your frame is a pair of sunglasses, you have to put in twice as much effort”





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Sony	Alpha 850	Jan
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Welcome to our test, reviews and advice section. Over the next few pages we will present this week's equipment tests, reader questions and technique pointers

PNY Optima 16GB SDHC card Around £35

As image sizes keep increasing, and with many DSLRs now capable of capturing video, the need for high-specification memory cards has never been greater.

PNY is well known in the computing industry for its memory modules, but is less well known among photographers. Its latest SDHC Optima cards have write speeds of up to 8MB/s and can read at 20MB/s (133x). When I tested the speed of the card I found it could copy 1GB of data from the card to a folder on an Apple Power Mac in 52 seconds, which is a fairly fast transfer time.

Using the PNY 16GB SDHC card in the 14.2-million-pixel Sony Alpha 550, the camera estimated that 2,258 fine-resolution JPEG images could be saved to the card. However, in-camera estimates are usually quite conservative, so I would expect a higher number can actually be saved.

PNY also estimates that it is possible to get 160 minutes of 1920x1080 MPEG-4 H264 video saved to the card, so it is also perfect for use with DSLRs with video capture, making it ideal for holidays.

Available in 2GB, 4GB, 8GB, 16GB and 32GB capacities, there is a card to suit the demands of most photographers. **Richard Sibley**

● For more information visit www.pny-europe.com



Micro verdict
A good alternative to cards from better-known manufacturers



Hama Softbox Air £21.95

The photographic market is awash with various different flash diffusers, but the Hama Softbox Air takes a slightly different approach. It is an inflatable softbox that can be attached to a flashgun in under a minute. Yet when it is deflated, it takes up very little room in a camera bag.

Once inflated, the softbox is attached to the head of a flashgun by using elastic cord with a sprung plastic lock.

This holds the diffuser reasonably well, but I would have preferred the softbox to have a slightly more 'rubbery' texture around where it grips the flash.

Using a Nikon D300 and SB-600 flashgun, I found that the front of the Softbox Air only made a slight difference to the softness of the light, as the material is not opaque enough to change it.

So, while a small collapsible softbox that folds neatly into a small space is a great idea, the Hama Softbox Air would benefit from a less transparent front diffuser.

Richard Sibley

● For more information visit www.hama.co.uk

Micro verdict
The Hama Softbox Air is a good idea, but it needs more diffusion

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Canon PowerShot S90

With full manual exposure control and the ability to save images as raw files, the **Canon PowerShot S90** may be the perfect compact camera for the demanding enthusiast photographer

Richard Sibley
Technical Writer



WITHIN the current Canon PowerShot range there are two compact cameras that are designed to appeal to the enthusiast photographer. Although the Canon PowerShot S90 is smaller and lighter than its sibling, the PowerShot G11, the two cameras share many of the same features. Most notable of these is the ten-million-pixel 1/1.7 inch CCD sensor.

However, the similarities don't end there. As with the G11, two of the main selling points of the S90 are its manual exposure control and ability to save images in Canon's CR2 raw file format. These features, plus its small size, are the S90's main attractions. This is a compact camera the enthusiast photographer can have full control over, which, on paper at least, makes the S90 ideal for when point-and-shoot images simply won't suffice.

Although the PowerShot S90 has only a 3.8x optical zoom lens rather than the 5x lens found on the G11, it is a 28-105mm equivalent, which is ideal for both landscapes and portraits. The lens also has a maximum aperture of f/2 and optical image stabilisation which, combined with a maximum sensitivity of ISO 3200, should make it useful in low light.

With aperture and shutter priority exposure modes, as well as an innovative control ring, the S90 looks like an interesting option for the enthusiast on those occasions when a DSLR would simply be overkill.

Build and handling

Unlike the Canon PowerShot G11, the S90 is an ultra-compact camera. Measuring 100x58.4x30.9mm and weighing 175g, it is small enough to fit inside a jacket pocket. With a discreet, simple, yet stylish design, it isn't a camera you would be embarrassed to be seen with at a party.

However, the body isn't all style and no substance, as the front and rear of the camera are made of metal and

feel solid and well built.

That is not to say there aren't a few peculiarities when it comes to handling. For example, when I first picked the S90 up and tried to press the shutter button, I missed by almost a centimetre. I think this button is set too far to the left of the position where I would naturally expect it to be. Passing the camera around to a few people at AP confirmed that it wasn't just me who thought this because most of the people who handled the camera instinctively pressed the top of the Mode dial rather than the shutter release.

Similarly, the neat pop-up flash rises from where I naturally hold the camera with my left hand, and it took me by surprise when the automatic flash popped up for the first time.

For the most part, though, these small ergonomic issues aren't a problem once you have used the camera for a while, and certainly shouldn't put off potential purchasers.

In fact, there is one handling feature of the S90 that I wish was included on the PowerShot G11 – the control

Canon PowerShot S90 High-end compact camera



At a glance

- 10-million-pixel sensor
- 28-105mm equivalent zoom lens
- ISO 80-3200
- 3in, 461,000-dot screen
- Street price around £380

ring. This is found around the base of the lens, and feels just like an aperture ring. In fact, when the camera is in aperture priority or manual exposure mode, the control ring can be set to change the aperture. This is a nice touch, and really adds to the camera's handling.

Aperture control isn't the only function of the control ring, as it can also



**Amateur
Photographer
Lab test**



Data file



Canon (UK), Woodhatch, Reigate, Surrey RH2 8BF.
Tel: 01737 220 000. Website: www.canon.co.uk

RRP	£449
Sensor	CCD with 10 million effective pixels
Output size	3648x2736 pixels
Focal length mag	N/A
Lens mount	Canon 3.8x zoom lens, 28-105mm (equivalent) f/2-4.9
Max file size	Approx 10MB raw, 3MB JPEG
File format	Raw, JPEG, raw + JPEG simultaneously
Compression	Fine, Normal
Colour space	sRGB
Shutter type	Electronically controlled focal-plane
Shutter speeds	15-1/1600sec in shutter priority and manual mode
Max flash sync	Up to 1/500sec
ISO	ISO 80-3200
Exposure modes	Auto, program, aperture priority, shutter priority, manual, custom modes and 16 scene presets
Metering system	Evaluative, centre weighted average and spot (can be linked to active AF point or face detection)
Exposure comp	±2EV in 1/3EV steps
Exposure bracketing	±2EV over 3 exposures in 1/3EV steps
White balance	Auto, 7 presets, plus 2 custom
WB bracket	No
Drive mode	Single and continuous. Approx 0.6fps maximum in continuous
LCD	3in LCD with approx 461,000 dots (153,600 pixels)
Viewfinder type	N/A
Focusing modes	Manual, single AF, continuous AF, face detection
AF points	9 points, selected automatically
DoF preview	No
PC socket	No
Built-in flash	Yes
Cable release	No, optional remote release
Memory card	SecureDigital/MMC and SDHC
Power	Rechargeable Li-Ion battery NB-6L
Connectivity	USB
Weight	175g (without battery or card)
Dimensions	100x58.4x30.9mm

Focal points

Software support

Canon's Digital Photo Professional software comes included with the PowerShot S90. This excellent software makes it simple to edit raw images and produces good results.

Flash

The small in-camera flash has a guide number of 6.5m @ ISO 100, although this is reduced to just 2.5m @ ISO 100 when at its maximum focal length. This is due to the smaller maximum aperture at this focal length.

i-Contrast

This feature applies a contrast curve to lift the shadow areas of an image. It can do this either at the time of capture, or it can be applied in playback mode to existing images.



be used to control the EV compensation, ISO sensitivity setting, stepped zoom setting, manual focusing and the white balance shift. Using the ring to control focusing, zoom and EV compensation feels very natural if you are used to handling a DSLR.

There is a button on the top of the camera to select those features you wish the ring to control. I changed this according to what I was photographing and the exposure mode I was using at the time. Generally, I had it set to control aperture or EV compensation.

As for the rest of the camera's handling, the S90 is largely the same as most other current Canon compact cameras. A mode dial controls the shooting mode, while buttons on the back provide direct access to the most commonly used functions, such as turning the flash on and off. A scroll dial is located on the back of the camera, which allows settings such as shutter speed and ISO sensitivity to be quickly scrolled through and selected from the on-screen menu.

In all, the range of dials and buttons makes it easy to select all the various controls and settings, regardless of whether they are accessed directly or via one of the camera's on-screen menus. However, as it has more buttons and controls, I prefer the handling of the PowerShot G11.

White balance and colour

In its default colour style, the PowerShot S90 produces bright images with good colour saturation. However, there are plenty of other colour settings should you wish to add more punch or tone down the colour

saturation. For holidays and events I recommend using the Vivid style for boosting the saturation of the colours to create striking images. Conversely, landscapes with brooding skies may benefit from the neutral colour setting. A custom My Colors style can also be created, saved and applied to all JPEG images.

Of course, colour styles are not applied to raw files. By their very nature these files contain just the raw image data from the camera. However, if you open the S90's CR2 raw files in Canon's Digital Photo Professional software, it is possible to apply any of the default colour styles to a raw image before saving it as a JPEG file.

The AWB setting did a great job and produced good results on bright sunny days, in overcast conditions and when under fluorescent and tungsten light. Similarly, the daylight balance setting produces neutral results on a sunny day, and good images when the sky was overcast.

One useful white balance-related feature is the ability to be able to set the control ring so that it adjusts the blue/amber white balance shift. Turning one way adds more blue, while turning the other adds more amber. Although I generally found better uses for the control ring, it was handy to be able to adjust the white balance quickly in this way.

LCD, Live View and video

With no optical viewfinder, the S90 user is reliant on its 3in, 461,000-dot LCD screen when composing images. Although traditionalists may dislike the lack of viewfinder, if the viewfinder on the PowerShot G11 is anything to go



Evaluative metering produced a good exposure in this image, and the colours are bright without being oversaturated

Resolution, noise and sensitivity

With a maximum sensitivity of ISO 3200, the Canon PowerShot S90 is capable of taking images in low-light conditions. Unfortunately, the small sensor produces quite a lot of image noise. Much of this noise is removed via aggressive noise reduction, which causes image details to have a smudged appearance, particularly at high sensitivities.

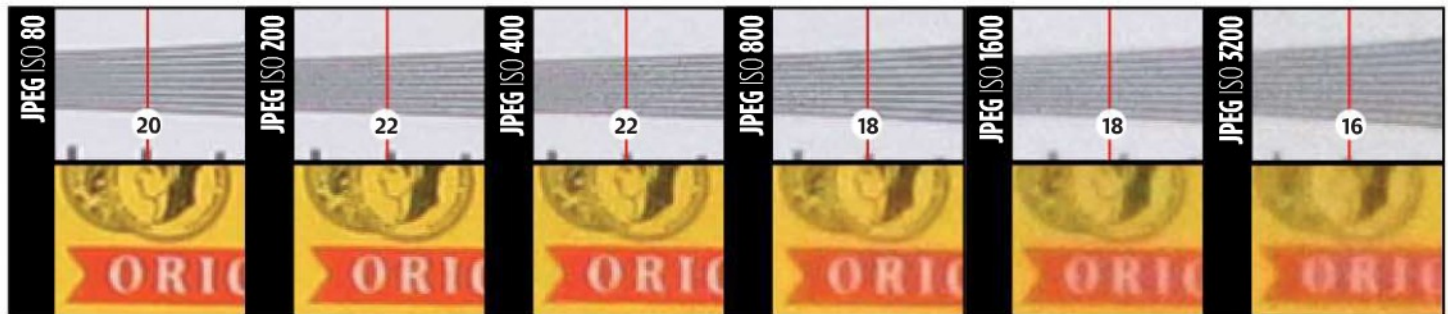
Below ISO 400 images exhibit far less chroma noise, but luminance noise is visible, although fairly unobtrusive.

Raw files captured by the S90 tell a similar story. Without any noise reduction noise is present at all sensitivity settings, although again it isn't really obtrusive until ISO 400. At ISO 3200, even when the luminance and chroma noise reduction

sliders are both set to 100 in Adobe Camera Raw, noise is still very apparent, with clumps of blue pixels appearing randomly in the image.

However, a compact camera such as the S90 isn't going to be used by photographers producing fine-art images or for competitions. In fact, most people who use the S90 won't be producing

prints any larger than A4, and I imagine the majority of the images will be printed at 6x4in size. As most users of the S90 will only occasionally be pushing the camera to its limits, the noise it produces at high sensitivity settings shouldn't be a concern – and it is certainly better than on many other compact cameras we have seen.



These images show 72ppi (100% on a computer screen) sections of images of a resolution chart, still-life scene and a grey card. We show the section of the resolution chart where the camera starts to fail to reproduce the lines separately. The higher the number visible in these images, the better the camera's detail resolution is at the specified sensitivity setting. The section of the still-life image contains the emblem on a standard-sized matchbox. The full scene can be viewed at <http://tinyurl.com/67sj96>. Images are taken using the Sigma 105mm f/2.8 EX DG Macro lens

by the S90 isn't missing out.

During my test of the S90 I didn't come across any problems with the screen. It is large and bright, and shows enough detail so it is possible to check images for details and sharpness.

The brightness of the live view preview changes to reflect how your image will be exposed and saved. This is useful should you be in a manual exposure mode or wish to use the EV compensation to adjust an exposure.

When adjusting the exposure compensation in video mode, the view on the screen also represents how the final footage will look. However, the exposure cannot be changed once video capture has started.

Metering

There are three metering modes – evaluative, centre and centre spot – on the Canon PowerShot S90. For most situations evaluative metering works very well, although like most compact cameras the S90 struggled a little with backlit scenes.

Centre spot metering generally proves more useful than centre weighted metering. This is especially true when it is used to make sure that the highlights in a scene aren't burnt out. By using the centre spot metering to take a reading of the image highlights and then setting the exposure compensation to +1EV, I find that highlights are bright but without being completely white, leaving enough detail for post-capture editing.

When the PowerShot S90 is given the more complicated task of using slow sync flash mode to expose for both flash and ambient light, the camera performs exceptionally well. Images are bright and well exposed.

Autofocus

It seems that contrast-detection AF has progressed about as far as it can with the technology currently available. Most high-end compact cameras now have a reasonably fast AF system, and it is often how well these systems perform in awkward lighting conditions that helps to distinguish one from another.

The S90's AF system performs very well. In good light the AF locks onto focus quickly. When given more challenging lighting conditions, the camera has a built-in red AF focus beam that lights a scene to help it find its point of focus.

Another useful feature is Face AiAF, which detects faces and focuses on them. Once it detects a face in a scene, the AF can track it as it moves around the scene.

However, if you aren't happy with the camera's autofocus, or you simply wish to be creative, the PowerShot S90 can be manually focused. When in manual focus mode, the centre of the frame is magnified to aid accuracy. Manual focusing on compact cameras can often be a fiddly process, but the control ring of the S90 makes it simple and it goes some way to replicating the feeling of manually focusing an SLR lens.

The competition



Canon PowerShot G11

DATE TESTED 14 NOVEMBER 2009



Fujifilm F200EXR

DATE TESTED 15 AUGUST 2009

PERHAPS the biggest rival to the S90 is the Canon PowerShot G11. Both have manual exposure modes as well as the option to capture images as raw files. However, the G11 has a viewfinder, 5x optical zoom and range of control dials, making it more of a replacement for a DSLR than truly pocketable compact camera.

One camera that is of a similar size to the PowerShot S90 is the Fujifilm FinePix F200EXR. We originally reviewed this camera in AP 15 August 2009 and it received an impressive four stars. With a slightly larger 1/1.6in, 12-million-pixel sensor and a 5x optical zoom lens (28–140mm equivalent), the F200EXR is similar in specification to the PowerShot S90. It lacks the ability to save images as raw files, but there is the option to capture images at sensitivities as high as ISO 12,800. With the Canon PowerShot G11 costing just slightly more than the S90, I would imagine that the G11 is the S90's main rival. However, at around £200, the Fujifilm FinePix F200EXR is a very good, if often overlooked, competitor.

Our verdict

SMALL, stylish and with full manual exposure control, the Canon PowerShot S90 is a great compact camera for those looking for a few more advanced features than the standard compact. Unlike its bigger brother, the PowerShot G11, the S90 is small enough to take anywhere. Although I prefer the way the G11 handles, I hope Canon finds a way to put the control ring feature of the S90 into the next G-series camera.

However, while the image quality of the S90 is very good for a compact camera, it doesn't really break any new ground. Also, with a street price of around £400, it is quite expensive.



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Sony Alpha 850

Thanks to the arrival of the **Sony Alpha 850**, the aspiring full-frame digital photographer now has another reasonably priced DSLR to consider, and only a few features separate it from the Alpha 900

Angela Nicholson
Technical Editor



SONY isn't in the habit of dabbling in markets, so when it decided to start manufacturing DSLRs it gave itself a head start by acquiring Konica Minolta's photographic business. Since then it has had an aggressive pricing policy, which has helped it achieve the number three position in the DSLR sales league table. It is an especially popular brand with young photographers who

respect the Sony name having spent their adolescence using PlayStations, listening to Walkmans and watching Sony televisions.

However, as well as feeding the expectations of Sony devotees, the company wants to please the Minolta followers who have continued with the Minolta A mount (now rebranded as the Sony Alpha mount), while at the same time enticing experienced photographers away from its competitors. Sony hopes that the new full-frame Alpha 850 will be a significant step towards winning a larger slice of the DSLR market.

This camera is remarkably similar

to the company's top-of-the-range model, the Alpha 900, but the price is significantly lower. While the Alpha 900 can be found on sale for around £1,899, most dealers are listing the Alpha 850 at around £1,650. The prospect of a full-frame camera for less than £1,700 is very enticing, but after a few months on sale perhaps it could even dip as low as £1,500, which is a significant milestone for many potential buyers.

Features

Like the Sony Alpha 900, the Alpha 850 has a CMOS sensor with 24.6



Sony Alpha 850 Semi-professional DSLR



At a glance

- 24.6 million effective pixels
- Full-frame CMOS sensor
- Approx 98% viewfinder
- 3in, 921,600-dot LCD screen
- SteadyShot Inside
- Dynamic range optimisation with bracketing
- Street price approximately £1,650

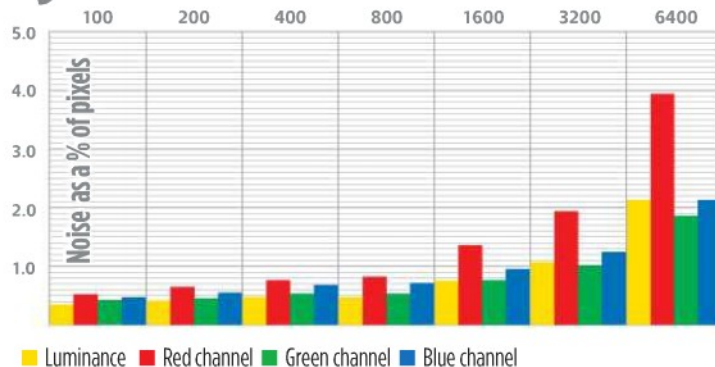
**Amateur
Photographer
Lab test**



Resolution, noise and sensitivity

As the resolution chart images show, the Alpha 850 has the same impressive ability to resolve fine detail as the camera it is based on, the Alpha 900. Thanks to its class-leading pixel count it is able to resolve lines further along our chart than almost all other cameras. This makes the Alpha 850 especially attractive to landscape and macro photographers who want to be able to extract the maximum amount of detail from a scene. It's just a shame that the camera doesn't offer a Live View image on the LCD screen, as this would really make it a firm favourite with these photographers.

Although the Alpha 850 has a full-frame sensor, a pixel count of 24.6 million requires very small photosites and noise



is therefore an inevitable risk. When the high-sensitivity noise-reduction system is turned off, JPEG files taken at ISO 6400

have the highest level of noise in the red channel that we have measured to date. The other channels are also pretty noisy

at this setting. Despite these high levels, though, I prefer the results captured when the high-sensitivity noise-reduction system is turned off, as the JPEG images are sharper and have more detail. Although images taken at ISO 6400 have plenty of coloured speckling visible, there is no banding in my images and the Extra Fine JPEG files don't require any post-capture sharpening. Interestingly, given our laboratory-based noise measurements, which match the results found with the Alpha 900, my images don't have significantly more red speckling than they do green and blue at ISO 6400.

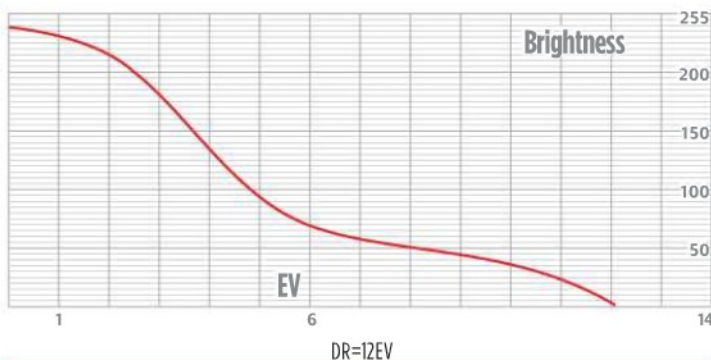
28/30

Dynamic range

It is often feared that dynamic range will be a casualty with densely populated sensors, but the Alpha 850 has a range of 12EV, which puts it on a par with most high-end DSLRs. It is also possible to extract a lot of detail from the shadows with a curves adjustment or by using the Dynamic Range Optimizer (D-RO).

There are seven settings available for the D-RO, in addition to 'off'. In its Standard setting, the D-RO adjusts contrast across the entire image. However, in the Advanced Auto and Advanced Level settings, the camera analyses the scene and brightens parts of the image selectively. There are five settings available in the Advanced Level option. Using too high a level results in artificially flat images as well as increased noise in shadow areas. Consequently, level five is best reserved for very high contrast situations and I mostly used level three.

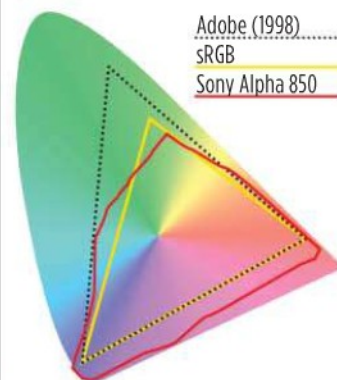
9/10



Understanding the graph

This graph shows the brightness values recorded by the test camera when it is used to photograph a stepped graduation wedge. The wedge has transmission values in 1/2EV steps ranging from 0 to 12EV. The camera's exposure is set so the 12EV section in the wedge has a brightness value of 255. Software analysis of the image then determines the recorded brightness values of all the other steps and calculates the camera's dynamic range.

Gamut



This graphic indicates that the Alpha 850 can reproduce the majority of the Adobe RGB gamut in the red, magenta, purple, blue and cyan areas, but as is often the case it struggles to capture the full subtlety of the range of greens available. Even the more restricted sRGB gamut is slightly clipped in the green area.

million effective pixels and approximately the same dimensions as a 35mm film frame. This pixel count puts it on a par with the £4,774 (average street price) D3X from Nikon and just ahead of the likes of the Canon EOS 5D Mark II (£1,769) or even the EOS-1Ds Mark III (£4,827), both of which have 21.1 million effective pixels.

Naturally, to make the Alpha 850 a little less expensive than the Alpha 900, Sony has had to make a few compromises. The most significant of these is a reduction in the maximum continuous shooting rate, which is 3fps on the Alpha 850 rather than the 5fps of the Alpha 900. Neither the Alpha 900 nor the Alpha 850 is really intended as a sports photographer's camera, and I suspect for many

prospective buyers this is not a huge sacrifice. The 2% reduction in the viewfinder coverage (now 98%) may also not concern photographers using APS-C-format cameras that offer around 96% coverage. Although I am sure they would like a 100% viewfinder, 98% coverage is probably close enough for many.

Unlike most other manufacturers, Sony rather generously includes the infrared RMT-DSLR1 Remote Release with the Alpha 900. This is an optional accessory with the Alpha 850, and it retails for around £26.99.

In other respects, the Alpha 850 is just like the Alpha 900. Sony has not taken the opportunity to introduce a Live View system to its full-frame DSLR. However, the LCD screen still measures 3in across the diagonal, and

its 921,600 dots (307,200 pixels) should ensure that the menu and any images look nice and crisp.

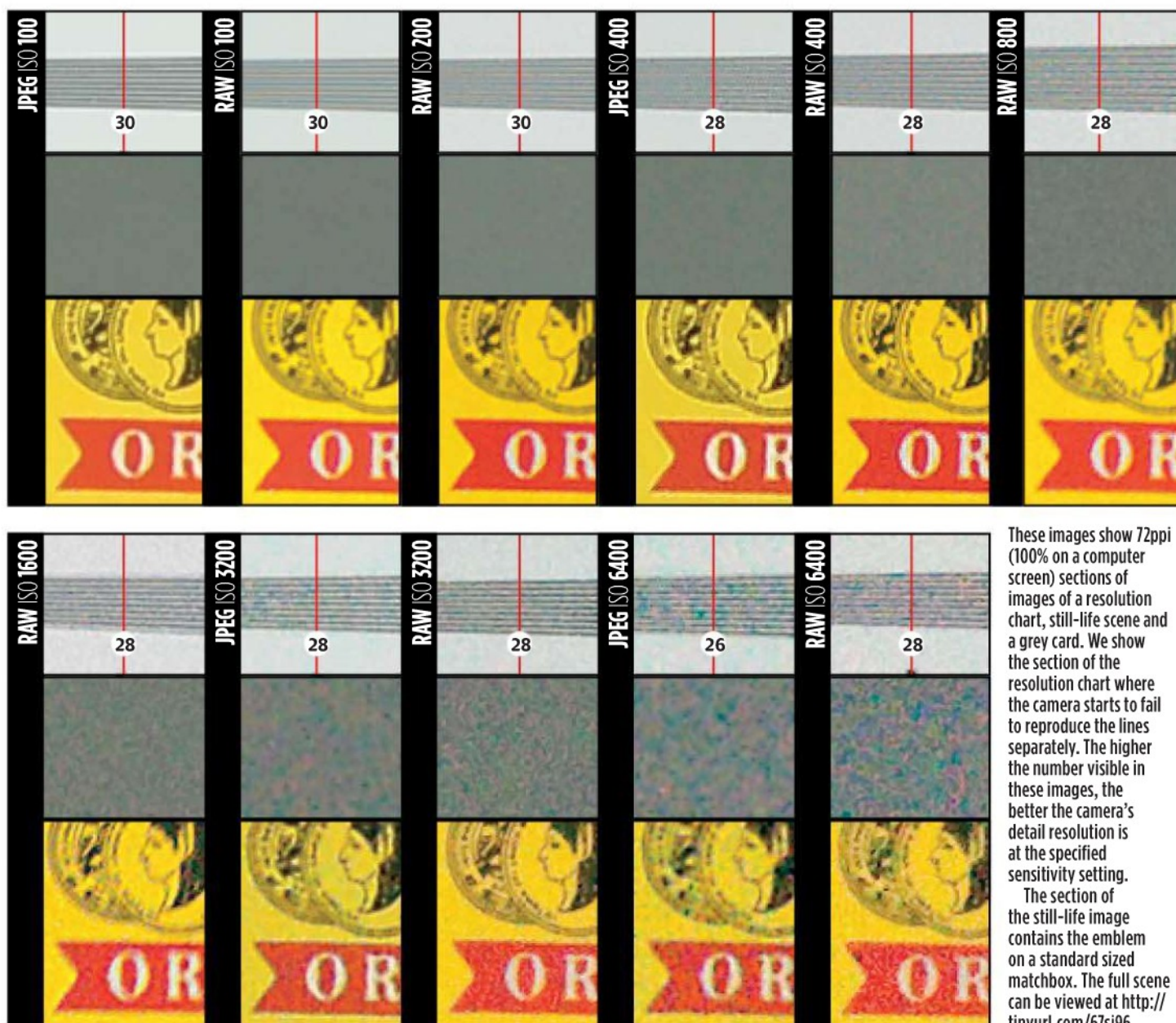
Those wishing to check the impact of setting changes on their images prior to their capture must use the Alpha 850's Intelligent Preview system. Once activated in the Custom menu, this allows an image to be captured, but not saved, when the depth of field preview button is pressed. The impact of changing settings such as the white balance and exposure are displayed on the resulting image. Once the preferred look is found, images may be captured and saved in the usual way.

Not surprisingly, but nevertheless a little disappointingly, Sony has also not made it possible to record the highest quality JPEG images (Extra

Fine) simultaneously with raw files. As with the Alpha 900, the Alpha 850 can only record Fine JPEG images at the same time. Ideally, I would like the option to specify the quality of the JPEGs that accompany raw files.

Aided by Apical, Sony has led the way with in-camera dynamic range optimisation, and the Alpha 850 has the same Dynamic Range Optimizer as the Alpha 900. In addition to the Automatic and Standard options, the system may be turned off or set to one of five levels of effectiveness in the Advanced Levels mode.

Sony users will be pleased to learn that the company hasn't made any compromise with the SteadyShot Inside system found in the Alpha 850, as it is the same as the one in the Alpha 900. As such, it is claimed to



These images show 72ppi (100% on a computer screen) sections of images of a resolution chart, still-life scene and a grey card. We show the section of the resolution chart where the camera starts to fail to reproduce the lines separately. The higher the number visible in these images, the better the camera's detail resolution is at the specified sensitivity setting.

The section of the still-life image contains the emblem on a standard sized matchbox. The full scene can be viewed at <http://tinyurl.com/67sj96>

extend the safe handholdable shutter speed range by up to 4EV. I generally find that it is good for around 2EV or 3EV extensions in most situations.

Given its status as a marginally edited version of the Alpha 900, there are no shocks with the specification of the Alpha 850. As Sony is a respected manufacturer of televisions, games consoles and video cameras, it surprises me that the company hasn't produced an enthusiast-level DSLR (full-frame or APS-C format) that features either Live View or video technology.

●●●●●●●●●● 7/10

Build and handling

The recent restyling that has been bestowed upon Sony's lower-level

DSLRs has not been applied to the Alpha 850 as it has the same angular looks of its full-frame forebear. It's not unattractive, but it is unlikely to draw too many admiring glances, either.

At 850g without batteries or memory card, the Alpha 850 is a little heavier than both the Canon EOS 5D Mark II and the Nikon D300S. Despite the weight, I like its solid, no-nonsense, robust feel. Reassuringly, there are no creaks or squeaks when the Alpha 850 is gripped and squeezed firmly, and the camera feels comfortable in my grasp. Rubberised coatings on the deep ergonomically shaped finger and thumb holds provide just enough grip to keep the camera from slipping in the hand, and the camera's contours seem to guide my right index

finger to the shutter release button.

Although the exposure compensation and drive mode buttons on the top plate are within easy reach of my finger when it's over the shutter release, the white balance and sensitivity control are not. These buttons are a little further back on the top plate and I am unable to reach them without adjusting my grip. Part of the problem is that the camera strap lug gets in the way of my index finger in its journey from the shutter-release button to the white balance or sensitivity controls. In fact, they are more conveniently reached by my right thumb. Reaching up to the top of the camera while looking at the setting options on the rear LCD doesn't feel especially natural at first, although it doesn't take long to get used to it.

The remaining buttons and dials are fairly sensibly arranged. I particularly appreciate the dials that enable the user to switch metering and focus modes. Along with the main mode dial, they provide enough resistance to prevent them from being accidentally knocked out of position on a frequent basis.

Although it isn't the most customisable camera on the market, there are a few ways in which the camera can be set up to the user's preferences. The Custom (C) button, for instance, can be set to access the image quality, Creative Style or D-Range Optimizer options. I chose to use it to reach the Creative Style settings, as this enables me to switch quickly to recording monochrome





The strong graphic lines of highlights and shadows in this scene made it a good monochrome subject. I shot it using the Alpha 850's default B/W Creative Style settings with the aspect ratio set to 16:9 to emphasise the converging lines

➔ JPEG files when the mood takes me. It is rather strange, however, that this option should be activated

via the Recording menu rather than the Custom menu. Similarly, the option to save up to three collections of settings for later recall via the main mode dial is also found on the fourth screen of the Recording menu.

As the Alpha 850 has no Live View or video modes with additional options that clutter up the menu or require controls, the camera is relatively straightforward to get to grips with. Nevertheless, it would be nice to have a personalised menu screen to which the most commonly required menu settings could be saved.

8/10

White balance and colour

While images from the Sony Alpha 850 are quite pleasant, when the automatic white balance setting is used they tend to have a colour cast that reflects the lighting conditions at the time. This isn't entirely desirable: even though it retains the atmosphere of the moment, the images have a little more atmosphere than was actually there at the time. For instance, shots taken towards either end of a sunny day, when the light starts to take on a warmer colour, are quite yellow. Conversely, images taken in very overcast conditions have a distinct blue tone. While this isn't especially surprising, as cameras are traditionally more sensitive to the different light colours than our

eyes (or rather our brains), other manufacturers' white balance systems often produce more neutral images in these types of situations.

When the light-specific white balance settings are used, the Alpha 850 does a better job of getting colours right. While shooting under thick cloud, for instance, the daylight white balance does a better job than the automatic setting, but the most accurate results are produced using the cloudy setting. Thankfully, Sony hasn't chosen to give images taken in these conditions a warm brown cast as some manufacturers seem to. Early on a frosty, sunny morning, however, the daylight setting produced blue images, while the automatic setting gave them a warm, golden look. The true picture is somewhere in between, but both sets of images have their own appeal.

As usual, there are a number of looks that can be applied to JPEG images on the Alpha 850. The Standard setting is a good starting point, and is suitable for most occasions, but the B/W (monochrome) is also useful, especially when shooting raw and JPEG files simultaneously. In addition, there are Vivid, Neutral, Portrait, Landscape, Sunset, Night View and Autumn Leaves options. The last three are sub-settings of the Landscape setting. The Vivid and Landscape settings are useful for creating punchy landscapes, but in most situations I would be more inclined to shoot raw images and process them to get the look I want.

7/10

Metering

Although it is backed up by centreweighted and spot metering modes (covering around 1.5% of the scene), I used the Alpha 850's 40-segment evaluative metering almost exclusively throughout this test because it proved to be very reliable. As you would expect, there are a

Data file

Focal points

Mirror lock-up

When vibration needs to be avoided, the mirror lock-up facility is useful. It can be accessed via the drive mode control button. Those who choose not to buy the optional remote release will appreciate the fact that the self-timer also lifts and locks the mirror automatically when the shutter release button is pressed to set the timer running.

Wireless flash

Although the Alpha 850 has no built-in flash unit, it can be set to take wireless control over flashguns such as the Sony HVL-F58AM. This makes for much more flattering portraits than using a hotshoe-mounted flash.

Advanced Auto D-RO

In its Advanced Auto mode, the Dynamic Range Optimizer analyses the image and selectively brightens the shadows to a level that it determines automatically. Those wishing to take control over the degree of shadow brightening that is applied should employ the Advanced Levels option. Alternatively, D-RO bracketing is available via the drive mode control. This records three images each time the shutter release is pressed and can be set to apply a large or small shift in the effect.



Sony UK, The Heights, Brooklands, Weybridge, Surrey KT13 0XL. Tel: 01932 816 000. Website: www.sony.co.uk

RRP	£1,999.99
Sensor	Sony CMOS with 24.6 million effective pixels
Output size	6048x4032 pixels
Focal length mag	1x (full frame)
Lens mount	Sony Alpha (+Konica Minolta Dynax)
Max file size	Approx 35.8MB raw file, (14 bit), 24.5MB approx (Extra fine quality, large JPEG)
File format	14-bit raw, JPEG (3 levels of compression available), JPEG + raw simultaneously
Compression	3-stage JPEG
Colour space	Adobe RGB, sRGB
Shutter type	Electronically controlled focal-plane
Shutter speeds	30-1/8000sec in 1/3, 1/2 or 1EV steps plus B
Max flash sync	1/200 (with SteadyShot Inside) 1/250sec (without SteadyShot Inside)
ISO	ISO 100-6400 in 1EV steps
Exposure modes	PASM, plus 3 custom modes
Metering system	40-zone evaluated, centreweighted, spot (approx 1.5%)
Exposure comp	±3EV in 1/3 or 1/2EV steps
Exposure bracketing	±2EV over 3/5 exposures in 1/3, 2/3, or 1EV steps. Also flash bracketing
White balance	Auto, 6 presets, plus 3 custom settings and Kelvin adjustment
WB bracket	3 exposures, Hi/Lo level selectable
Drive mode	Single, continuous (Hi/Lo selectable, 5fps/3fps), self-timer (10/2secs selectable) mirror lock-up
LCD	3in TFT with 921,600 dots and 160° viewing angle
Viewfinder type	Pentaprism
Field of view	Approx 100%
Dioptre adjustment	-3 to +1 dioptre
Focusing modes	Manual, single shot, automatic AF, continuous AF, direct manual focus
AF points	9 points selectable individually or automatically (in wide area mode)
Focusing screen	Spherical acute matte Type G screen, with Type L (grid) and Type M (super-aspherical acute matte screen) available optionally
DoF preview	Yes
PC socket	Yes
Built-in flash	No
Cable release	No, optional remote release
Memory card	CompactFlash (inc UDMA)/MemoryStick Duo
Power	Rechargeable Li-Ion battery NP-FM500H (supplied)
Connectivity	USB 2.0 Hi-Speed/HDMI
Weight	850g (without battery or card/s)
Dimensions	156.3x116.9x81.9mm

“I have no complaints about the 3in LCD, as its 921,600 dots ensure reviewed images are crisp and clear”

LCD and viewfinder

Mode dial

Up to three sets of camera settings may be saved and accessed via the three custom options on this dial

Eye sensors

These sensors detect when the camera is held to the eye and turn off the LCD screen, but unlike some other Sony DSLRs the Alpha 850 doesn't feature Eye-start technology, so they don't trigger the AF or metering systems

LCD screen

With 921,600 dots, this screen is very crisp and provides a clear view of both the menu and the images being reviewed



Custom button

As well as accessing the histogram view when reviewing images, this can be set to access the Creative Style or D-RO options

Camera shown actual size

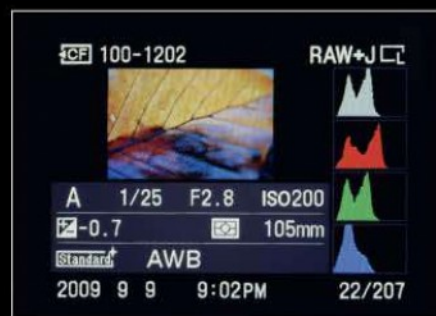
Information display



White balance adjustment



Review display



Unusually today, the Alpha 850 has no Live View or video technology, so this section focuses solely on its viewfinder and LCD screen. I have no complaints about the 3in LCD, as its 921,600 dots (307,200 pixels) ensure reviewed images (and the menu) are crisp and clear with plenty of detail. When the magnified view is used to check captured images,

it is possible to see whether the subject is sharp as well as assess the level of noise in high-sensitivity images. It's just a shame that the screen cannot be used to assist with manual focusing before the image is actually captured.

The Alpha 850's viewfinder offers a 98% field of view. Even though this isn't much less than the 100% of the Alpha

900, it is noticeable. When shooting a still life I took several test shots and had to adjust the camera's position a few times before I was completely happy with the composition. Of course, in many situations any unwanted objects at the image edges can be cropped out.

Although the Alpha 850's viewfinder is bright and clear, I find that the corners of

the viewfinder housing often obstruct my view and I have to adjust my eye position carefully to avoid vignetting. This is also an issue with the Alpha 900 and I thought Sony would be able to address this with the Alpha 850's small finder, but clearly it cannot.

7/10



While both these images are attractive in their own way, this early morning frosty scene actually looked somewhere between the two almost opposite versions

few situations that can fool the camera into under or overexposing, but for the most part it puts in a good performance. When shooting towards a bright, misty sky, I was impressed to find that the foreground was not as underexposed as I expected. Furthermore, using the Dynamic Range Optimizer enabled more of the foreground detail to be brought out than I could actually see at the time.

In tricky lighting conditions, it is a good idea to keep an eye on the histogram view as the Alpha 850's LCD screen tends to make dark subjects look brighter than they are. If the image alone is used to gauge exposure, there is a danger that the exposure compensation facility may be used to reduce the exposure when it is not actually necessary.

●●●●●●●●●● 8/10

Autofocus

Like the Alpha 900, the Alpha 850 has nine user-selectable AF points, with a further ten supplementary points that cannot be manually selected. The central point has a dual cross sensor for added sensitivity.

Although the 3fps maximum continuous shooting rate may not lend the Alpha 850 to sports photography, most enthusiast photographers want a camera that can be put to a variety of uses. In reasonable light conditions the Alpha 850's AF system is swift and decisive. When shooting a local rugby match under a heavily laden sky, the less-sensitive peripheral AF points were a fraction slower to pull the subject into sharp register than the central point, but I didn't

experience much hunting when using the continuous AF mode.

Although there are three modes available for selecting the AF area to use – Wide, Spot and Local – there are very few occasions when I would use the Wide option. This method allows the camera to select any of the 19 available AF points and takes control away from the photographer. With team sports such as rugby, it tends to latch on to the nearest potential subject – another player or referee, perhaps – rather than the real point of interest. It could, however, be useful when photographing subjects such as birds, which move unpredictably against a clean background.

In its Spot mode, the AF point is locked to the centre. While this may be useful on occasions, it makes more sense to use the Local option, which allows the user to select any of the nine available AF points using the mini-joystick multi-direction controller. A quick press of this is enough to select the central AF point. I found this controller within easy reach of my right thumb and have no problem selecting the appropriate AF point when the camera is held to my eye.

When light levels fall to the point when the maximum sensitivity setting (ISO 6400) is required to allow movement-freezing shutter speeds (and on an overcast day at this time of year that seems to be around 3pm), the Alpha 850's outer AF points become too slow to use when shooting action so it's best to stick with the central point. In its continuous mode it does a respectable job of keeping up with the action provided the selected AF point is kept over the subject.

●●●●●●●●●● 7/10

Our verdict

I AM a little confused by what Sony is doing at the moment. The company started out with such determination to shake up the DSLR market and seemed set to introduce all sorts of new and exciting features, yet it has failed to include technology such as Live View and video recording in its higher-level DSLRs. We are told that the company is 'looking at' including video in its lower-level DSLRs, but that Live View is not something Sony considers important to the high-end user. Given the Alpha 850's high pixel count and its ability to record a high level of detail, it could be very attractive to studio, still-life and macro photographers, many of whom could benefit from a Live View system.

Apart from the introduction of an image-combining auto HDR mode in the Alpha 500 and 550, it's most recently introduced DSLRs don't offer a great deal more than earlier models. While this is also true of the Alpha 850, its attractive street price means it offers enthusiast photographers something they really want: an affordable full-frame digital camera with a very capable sensor. Its AF system may not be quite up to the specification of Nikon's enthusiast-level DSLRs, and it doesn't have the same level of customisation as some of its competitors, but it is a good all-rounder with high build quality, and it deserves the attention of enthusiasts.

Lab results

Features	●●●●●●●●●●	7/10
Noise/resolution	●●●●●●●●●●	28/30
Dynamic range	●●●●●●●●●●	9/10
LCD/viewfinder	●●●●●●●●●●	7/10
Build/handling	●●●●●●●●●●	8/10
Autofocus	●●●●●●●●●●	7/10
Metering	●●●●●●●●●●	8/10
AWB/colour	●●●●●●●●●●	7/10

Sony Alpha 850
Tested as: Semi-pro DSLR
Rated: Very good
81%

The competition



Nikon D3X

DATE TESTED 24 JANUARY 2009



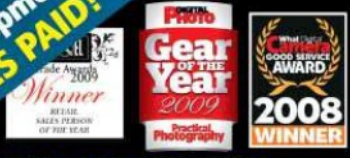
Canon EOS 5D Mark II

DATE TESTED 17 JANUARY 2009

A PART from the Sony Alpha 850 and 900, the only other digital SLR that offers 24 million pixels is the Nikon D3X, which is almost three times the price of the new Alpha camera. Among other things, the additional £3,100 buys Nikon's superb 51-point AF system, Live View capability (with autofocus) and a maximum continuous shooting rate of 5fps. It's a great camera, but the cost puts it well beyond the reach of most enthusiast photographers.

The most likely non-Sony competition for the Alpha 850 is the Canon EOS 5D Mark II, which retails for around £1,769. This camera has more extensive weather sealing and customisation options, as well as Live View, HD video recording technology and a marginally faster continuous shooting rate of 3.9fps. Low-light shooters will also appreciate the Canon camera's sensitivity extension settings, which give a maximum ISO equivalent of 25,600. However, it doesn't offer in-camera image stabilisation or wireless flash control. We will answer the question of what is the best option for enthusiast photographers looking for a full-frame DSLR in next week's issue.

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Simply send your questions to: apanswers@ipcmedia.com or by post to: AP Answers, Amateur Photographer Magazine, IPC Media, Blue Fin Building, 110 Southwark Street, London SE1 0SU.

Second-hand choice

Peter Marsh asks I have a Canon EOS 350D and an EOS 30 with lenses, but I would like a camera with a full-frame sensor and all that it will bring (low noise, a bigger viewfinder, traditional focal lengths and so on). I do not want my SLR to take video as I'll buy a video camera if I want to make movies! With this in mind, a second-hand EOS 5D seems to fit the bill. I can afford a new EOS 5D Mark II, but the extra £1,000 will be put towards lenses. Is there any reason not to search out a mint EOS 5D?

Matt Golowczynski replies There hasn't been a better time to invest in a Canon EOS 5D, given how sharply its asking price has fallen since the arrival of the EOS 5D Mark II and the more recent EOS 7D. While it was retailing at around £1,300 upon the EOS 5D Mark II's introduction, it's now common to see second-hand models in good condition for as little as £650, although finding one in mint condition may be a little more difficult. Regardless of the body's cosmetic condition, there are a few things to

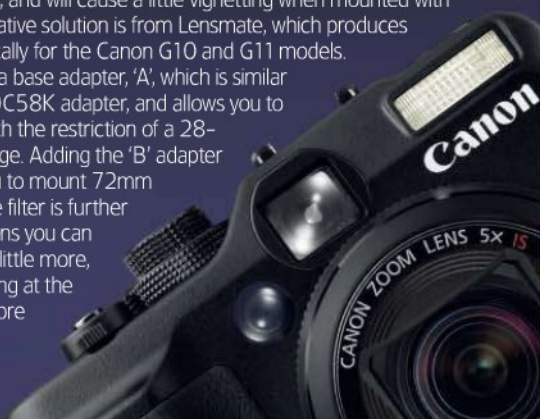
bear in mind when considering the purchase of any second-hand body. The number of shutter actuations is worth checking, particularly for a camera like the EOS 5D, which has been designed for use in semi-professional environments. Some sellers state this figure as part of their listing, although with others you may have to enquire about this. In any case, this can be checked and verified with software. Given that the EOS 5D doesn't have any form of sensor cleaning, check whether it has recently been serviced professionally. Also bear in mind that any manufacturer's warranty is likely to have long expired.



Filter for a Canon G10

Bernie Rowlands asks I use a Canon PowerShot G10 on regular mountaineering trips because it is robust, small and easy to use in a variety of often difficult mountain conditions. While I like the G10, I am very aware that without using a polarising filter I am often not getting the best results in stunning mountain scenery. Do any manufacturers fill this need, or is there another solution, bearing in mind the need for ease of use in varying and often difficult circumstances when shots may have to be taken quickly?

Matt Golowczynski replies Canon doesn't manufacture a polariser for the PowerShot G10, Bernie, although it is possible to mount a polariser onto the LA-DC58K conversion lens adapter, which costs around £35. The only caveat with this is that the polariser will obstruct the lens if you attempt to zoom out too far, and will cause a little vignetting when mounted with a filter. An alternative solution is from Lensmate, which produces adapters specifically for the Canon G10 and G11 models. It manufactures a base adapter, 'A', which is similar to Canon's LA-DC58K adapter, and allows you to mount a filter with the restriction of a 28-50mm focal range. Adding the 'B' adapter to this allows you to mount 72mm filters, and as the filter is further away from the lens you can also zoom out a little more, with less vignetting at the wide end. For more details visit www.lensmateonline.com.



Backpack quest

Gary Smith asks I currently have a LowePro backpack to carry my Nikon D300 and two zoom lenses in when I go hiking, but as the backpack sits on my back I end up sweating heavily. Is there a photographer's hiking backpack that has a frame, like an 'ordinary' framed rucksack?

Matt Golowczynski replies There are a number of photography rucksacks with mesh-lined backs designed to minimise perspiration, but you will have more trouble finding a framed one unless you opt for something not designed specifically for photographic equipment. German bag manufacturer Deuter produces a range of bags with hikers and cyclists in mind, and many feature a steel frame and Advanced Aircomfort Back System technology. This, the company claims, reduces perspiration by up to 25%, and as the technology is incorporated into a range of bag sizes it might be your best option if you plan on taking little else other than your camera gear when hiking. For more information visit www.deutergb.co.uk.

FAQ

Frequently Asked Question

On its own, the sensor inside a digital camera can't discriminate between different colours, so a method of filtering incoming light is required. Most cameras today do this with a Bayer GRGB filter array, which comprises a mosaic of green, red and blue filters, half of which are green to mimic our heightened sensitivity towards green light. Once a sensor has captured this information, the camera (or a third-party

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Kit for DIY developing

Zou asks Due to the cost of having 5x4 film developed by a lab (£2.50 a sheet), I want to do it myself at home. I've been developing 35mm and 120 for a while now with no problems, so I am comfortable with the processes involved. The options seem to be the Paterson Orbital, CombiPlan tank and a Jobo drum, or, of course, hiring a local darkroom and using trays. This may be worth a try to see if it is practical for me, but in the long run I know it would be more economical to do the developing at home. For someone like myself, starting out with DIY 5x4, what do you recommend? I am tempted to just bite the bullet and grab the first good condition Orbital I can find.

Hhmr replies I do a bit with a 5x4, and my solution to the problem so far has been to use Ilford Ortho Plus, which is easily available and can be developed in a dish under a safelight. I also rather like the tonality. I don't have a darkroom, just a blacked-out bathroom with a row of four trays in the bottom of the bath and a cheap safelight hanging from a hook over the door. I develop by time rather than inspection with the solutions at room temperature, just as I do with 35mm and 120 in daylight tanks.

Pilliwinks replies I rarely use anything other than 5x4 these days. You don't say whether you're using colour neg/slide or black & white, so I'll assume the latter. The first and third options both involve continuous agitation, which does reduce some of the development options that black & white enthusiasts are used to – you might consider that you'll never want to use an acutance developer, but methods one and three will eliminate the possibility. I know there are stories about uneven development with the CombiPlan tanks, but I'm unsure whether this is due to the fill/empty times or to the sheets being so physically close when six sheets are developed at once.

An alternative to this, if you don't mind being in the dark, is to use the film holder and transfer it from one tank to another in the dark – either extra CombiPlan bodies, or other containers of the same depth. If you don't mind working in the dark, you could use the CombiPlan film holder and the actual tank (without lid) holding the developer. Put the holder in to start the development, agitate by lifting and dropping, and at the end of the development process transfer to another container with the stop bath. This needs to be the same depth as the Combi tank, but that's all. The volume is bound to be greater, but the solution can be re-used. Then put it into the fixer, again in a different container. Alternatively, if colour is what you have in mind, you can buy a set of CombiPlan tanks in a thermostatically adjusted waterbath and proceed as above – in the dark.

piece of software) needs to interpolate this information in order to produce a complete image.

Despite the GRGB filter array being standard for many years, manufacturers experimented with alternatives in the early days of digital capture in order to assess whether it was indeed the best solution. One of these was the Bayer CMY colour filter array, which used cyan, magenta and yellow filters, and was employed in Kodak's DCS 620x DSLR. This appealed on a theoretical level, as more light could pass through to each photosite than through one of the RGB primary colours. As such, the camera was able to offer a relatively wide sensitivity latitude and

was targeted at press and sports photographers, although reconstructing this information made colour fidelity difficult to maintain – which explains why the GRGB colour filter array triumphed.

Today, only Sigma's Foveon technology strays far from this idea, instead using layers of silicon to absorb different wavelengths of light – a process that requires no further interpolation. Fujifilm's Super CCD EXR technology is also different (albeit to a lesser degree), in that the structure of the colour filter array may be altered to increase its sensitivity. This does, however, still use a red, green and blue filter array with which to determine colour information. Matt Golowczynski

Next week

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Canon EOS 5D Mark II vs Sony Alpha 850

Angela Nicholson tests two 20MP, full-frame digital SLRs with a price tag below £1,800. Which is best?

Amateur Photographer Twin test

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We talk to **Kathy Wright**, winner of our **Amateur Photographer of the Year 2009** competition



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Using the Organiser to bring order to your photo collection

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Oskar Barnack

1879-1936

Geoffrey Crawley recalls the life and work of the German precision engineer who, in 1924, brought forth a revolution in photography with his Leica 35mm film camera

LUDWIG Leitz, son of Ernst Leitz II who was 'midwife' to the Leica 35mm cameras, once said to me: 'You see, Mr Barnack was a fine engineer but a simple man, who was not able to make the case for his camera to a directorial board.'

Leitz was explaining to me why Oskar Barnack sat outside the boardroom when the fate of his camera was being decided. This was something that had baffled people for many years. The other 'rumour' was that Barnack had been poached from Zeiss to work for Leitz. In fact, Barnack was a weekly wage earner – Ludwig Leitz showed me the document – who was free to move as he wished. If he had been a salaried employee, the two companies would have needed to agree the move formally.

Oskar Barnack was born in 1879 near Berlin, Germany, and studied to be a master mechanic. He worked for a few years in Vienna, Austria, before moving to the Zeiss-owned Paltmos camera works in Jena in 1902, working in camera assembly. In 1906 Kodak introduced the Cirkut camera for panoramic photographs. It was expensive gear and used a lot of film. Barnack, who was asthmatic and averse to carrying heavy equipment up hills, had the idea of miniaturising a panoramic camera by using a wideangle lens on the longer-than-wide 6x13cm stereo plate. However, he could generate no interest in its manufacture.

Over in Wetzlar, Leitz, already famous for its microscopes, was showing interest in the blossoming movie camera and projection market. A friend of Barnack's had moved to Leitz and recommended he do the same. He became a Leitz employee in 1911. The friend had mentioned to Ernst Leitz II that Barnack had designed a camera. Whether this was the panoramic or a prototype Leica is not clear, but in 1912 Ernst



Above: A self-portrait of Oskar Barnack, 1914. The format shows it might have been taken with a Leica prototype

Leitz II took a prototype to the US on a business trip. Ludwig Leitz remembered his father returning with it, but we do not know if any pictures were taken with it.

Barnack and Ernst Leitz became close friends. Prospects of production were put on hold between 1914 and 1918 because of the First World War, although the Leica prototypes were being used. However, the camera was being taken seriously from photographs taken from a Zeppelin, probably exploring its uses for reconnaissance work.

The fateful decision as to the camera's future was taken before the 1925 Leipzig industrial fair: should it be shown or not? The board meeting reached an impasse. It was up to the chairman. After a long silence he murmured, 'Es wird riskiert' ('We will risk it') and the revolution got underway. The risk lay in the post-war economic depression in Germany with its raging inflation. If the work on the new camera did not start, there would be massive worker layoffs. If it failed, the firm would be in trouble.

And what of Barnack? He seems

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Below: Oskar Barnack's desire to move away from traditional heavy plate cameras led to the production of the first Leica (a contraction of Leitz Camera) in 1924. It was introduced to the public in 1925



to have continued to develop the Leica until his death in 1936, aged 57. At that time, to hold any position in Leitz or its subsidiaries, you had to have assembled a Leica and had it passed by Barnack. The camera then became yours. His standalone office/workshop was left untouched for a time. Eventually when it was examined, drawings for a single-lens reflex camera were found, and drafts for an 'upside-down' Leica. Barnack was aware that an eye-level 35mm camera rocks on the nose. By putting the major controls on the base it could be rested securely against the

forehead. Coincidentally or not, a Russian viewfinder camera on this principle was built in the post-Second World War years.

'You see, Mr Barnack was a fine engineer but a simple man...' It was that simplicity, embodied in his camera's functionality, that enabled it to outsell the Zeiss Contax, a more advanced design with features the Leica only later incorporated. This 'simple man' revolutionised photography in a manner not matched until the arrival of the digital camera – and that is built generally on the shape he designed. **AP**

SIGMA



OUR WORLD

Liz O. Baylen: Born in 1979. Graduated from Ohio University's School of Visual Communications in 2001 and began working for The Washington Times. She has covered assignments around the world and was selected as a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize while with The Washington Times. Most recently, her images have appeared in The New York Times and Los Angeles Times.

Photo data: SIGMA APO 120-400mm F4.5-5.6 DG OS HSM, 1/2500 second at f5.6.



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19 OCT 4x4 Game Drives to Samburu Intrepids. Back to Lodge
20 OCT 4x4 Game Drive before breakfast. Internal Flight to Masai Mara Game Reserve. 4x4 Game Drive to Mara Intrepids. Back to Heritage Hotels Tented Lodge
21 OCT 4x4 Game Drives to Mara Intrepids. Back to Lodge
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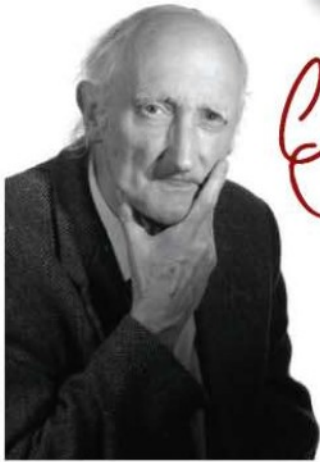
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Geoffrey Crawley explains...

Lenses and focal length

GEOFFREY CRAWLEY TAKES A CLOSE LOOK AT VARYING DIGITAL FORMATS AND HOW THEY AFFECT FOCAL LENGTH

If you type the word 'lenses' into the search bar on any of the main lens manufacturers' websites, headings such as ultra-wide zooms, standard zooms, telephoto zooms, wideangle, standard and medium telephoto, telephoto, super telephoto and macro will appear. There are likely to be several products listed under each of these headings, and the newcomer to (D)SLR photography, with the camera's ability to swap lenses, may be a little bewildered by the various options.

Standard lenses

Photography has moved on from the time when a 35mm film SLR was automatically bought with a standard 50mm f/1.8-2 monofocal (fixed-focal-length) lens. Having absorbed the initial financial shock, a

photographer's thoughts would soon progress to which choice of lens to add next. Should it be a wideangle optic of 35mm or 28mm, or a long focus one of 90mm or 135mm? That problem has now gone with the availability of zoom (variable-focal-length) lenses. In order to keep the start-up cost down, a 'kit lens' is often sold with the camera. These optics cover the mid-range of focal lengths and are therefore termed 'standard zoom' lenses. They fulfil a useful purpose and are usually light in weight, although they fail to reach the performance standard of the more expensive standard zoom lenses.

A newcomer to photography today will almost certainly be buying APS-C-format digital cameras rather than the more expensive models that make use of the full-frame,

24x36mm format. For those who have never dealt with a full-frame camera, it may be puzzling to see focal lengths continuously referred to by what their equivalent viewing angle on a 35mm camera would be. This is because there remains a large band of photographers who were brought up on 35mm film.

Due to its smaller size, an APS-C-format sensor only covers part of a half-frame lens image circle. It results in the viewing angle being narrowed to that of a longer focal-length lens when used on a full-frame model. The factor is about a 1.5-1.6x increase, so an 18-55mm lens actually sees the full-frame field of a 27-72mm optic. The 'normal' focal length for any format is taken as equalling its diagonal. The diagonal of the APS-C format is about 27mm, although

it varies a little with camera make. Therefore, an 18-55mm lens gives a reasonable span from wide to near tele. It is the equivalent of 27-72mm on a full-frame sensor, for which 50mm is regarded as the slightly long focus 'normal'.

Wide and tele zoom lenses

The category of super- or ultra-wideangle zoom lenses for the APS-C format roughly covers the focal length of 10-24mm. A popular span is 10-20mm (equivalent to 15-35mm on full frame), which links to the equally popular 18-55mm standard zoom. Super-wideangle lenses need careful handling to keep the camera horizontal and upright, as the distortion of the subject might otherwise ruin the picture. Apart from including a wide view, a wideangle lens will also help to capture an image of a tall building when it is not possible to move far enough back to take the picture with a normal lens.

After super-wideangle and standard lenses come the telephoto zoom optics. With the standard zoom lens reaching to 50-55mm in focal length, there are several optics from each manufacturer that link on from around this focal length region: 50-150mm, 50-200mm, 50-300mm and 50-500mm are just some of the options available. It is very tempting to go for a really long focal length, but the question must be asked about how often it will be needed. If you are photographing sports and wildlife then these longer focal lengths will be a real benefit, although a maximum of 200-300mm will cover most situations.

The focal lengths up to about 135mm are often the most useful. Head-and-shoulder portraits, as well as head shots, are usually taken on the 70-135mm span. Then there are the super-zoom lenses that cover wideangle to tele: 18-200mm is a popular focal-length range on the APS-C format. There is some sacrifice in image quality when using them, but that is offset by the convenience of an all-in-one lens. Zoom lenses are usually preferred by new SLR owners because of the flexibility immediately given by the long focal-length range. If you have a standard zoom lens bundled in with your camera as a kit lens, then the best plan would be to add a tele zoom lens, joining on at 50-55mm and ending wherever your ambitions dictate.

Monofocal lenses tend to give higher image quality and provide wider apertures, but they are also costlier. When moving on to a more advanced SLR, this might be the time to consider adding one or more monofocal lenses of the focal lengths you have used most often.



24mm on full frame



35mm on full frame



50mm on full frame

The science

THE single-lens reflex (SLR) camera solved the main problem of the previously popular coupled-rangefinder camera. That was – and still is – the provision of a rangefinder frame to match the focal length of the lens in use. It leads to a fairly limited number of focal-length options. The SLR system solves that by showing the field of whatever optical device you attach. It opened the floodgates, and nowadays there are several hundred lenses available, with many available in a variety of SLR camera fittings. This article attempts to chart a course through the throng.

Two formats

There are two main groups of lenses today. The first is designed to cover the digital full-frame, 24x36mm format, or 135 format in film terms. The second consists of those lenses covering the smaller format used by the majority of digital SLRs, approximating to the old, classic APS-C format. There are variations, but a ball-park figure would be 15.5x23.5mm, a little smaller than the half-frame film format, which measures 18x24mm. It is traditional, and practical, to regard the length of any format's diagonal as being equal to the focal length of a standard or 'normal' lens used for that format. For the APS-C format this is usually taken as 27mm; for full frame, that figure is 43mm. Of course, this means that the 50mm focal

Above: These images show the impact of changing the focal length with a full-frame digital or 35mm camera

length usually regarded as standard on a full-frame camera is actually somewhat long. This accident of history is believed to have helped compositions in the 2:3 aspect ratio of this format, and so helped its popularity.

While a full-frame lens can be used with an APS-C-size sensor, a lens made for the APS-C format will leave a centre circle only on the full-frame format. The correct usage is given by a code, which unfortunately differs between manufacturers. Canon's EF-S lenses, which are designed for the APS-C format, cannot be attached to its full-frame cameras; its EF (full frame) lenses will fit the smaller format, though. Nikon DX lenses are designed for APS-C and FX for full frame. Sigma uses DG for full frame and DC for APS-C. Tamron's Di signifies full-frame, whereas Di II means APS-C.

Format equivalence

At this time, and for a few more years yet, many digital camera owners will have cut their photographic teeth on film SLRs. A number of focal lengths have become landmarks, such as 21mm, 28mm, 35mm, 50mm, 85mm, 105mm, 135mm and so on. The mention of one of these focal lengths calls to mind a rough angle of



Medium-format lens for producing 6x7cm negatives



The uncorrected view through a 10mm fisheye lens on an APS-C-format camera with trademark distortion (35mm equivalence is 16mm)



70mm on full frame



200mm on full frame



400mm on full frame

35mm
and APS-
C-format
lenses

A



B



C

coverage and the kind of use it might have. However, acquiring a digital camera that makes use of the smaller APS-C format upsets this intuitive understanding. A 28mm lens gives a wideangle view when attached to full-frame cameras, but the smaller format's diagonal of 27mm means this lens gives a standard angle of view when used with APS-C-format cameras. The smaller size chops off part of a full-frame image circle, reducing the viewing angle to about that of a lens 1.5x-1.6x its focal length.

To help the traditional full-frame user, focal-length equivalence is therefore given. Thus, a 35mm lens gives a 52mm field of view on the APS-C format, more or less that of a standard lens on a full-frame SLR. A 105mm lens will give a 157mm viewing angle, and so on. Of course, putting a lens on a smaller format does not alter its focal length – just how much of its view is included. To find the equivalent focal length of a lens on the APS-C format, divide the full-frame focal length by 1.5-1.6.

Above: Unlike older optics (B and D), modern autofocus lenses (A) communicate with the camera via contacts in the lens mount

Thus, the smaller format equivalent of a full-frame 35mm lens is 23mm, and of a 105mm optic it is 70mm.

Retro and tele

The SLR camera opened the gates to numerous zoom and monofocal lenses, since whatever they cover is shown in the viewfinder. It did bring another problem, though: the space taken up by the swinging mirror meant that the back of the lens was pushed forward. With wideangle lenses, which have short focal lengths, new designs had to be made. In these, the back focus – the distance between the rear element and the image plane – equals or exceeds the focal length. This design is known as retrofocus. Until it was developed, very wideangle lenses, such as 21mm on full frame, had to be used with the camera's reflex mirror locked up to allow it to recess into the camera.

A telephoto lens's back focus is

shorter than its focal length: the opposite of a retrofocus design.

The design of a single lens whose focal length could be varied goes back to 1891 and an argument between the UK's Thomas Dallmeyer and Germany's Adolph Miethe about whose version came first. The difference denoted by the description 'zoom' is that focus does not change with the focal length. The zoom arrived in the 1950s for movie and TV work, but it was the mid-'60s before they were built to give a high enough image quality for still photography on the full-frame 135 format. The zoom lens's success has depended on four factors. First, highly sophisticated anti-reflection coatings have been developed enabling the creation of multi-element optics. Second, new optical glasses have given control over colour aberrations. Third, aspheric-surfaced elements have allowed the reduction of spherical

aberration, a particular problem with wide-ranging zoom optics. Fourth, mount engineers have designed complex cam systems that enable the separation of groups of elements to be varied with great freedom.

The choice

So how do we stand in the digital era? Here follow some guidelines: a monofocal lens for full-frame or APS-C formats can be expected to offer a wider aperture and better performance than a zoom lens set to that focal length; wide-ranging super-zoom optics give lower image quality than two zooms splitting the same focal length span; older zoom and monofocal lenses designed for film SLRs will work well on full-frame digital models and very well on the APS-C format, which uses the centre of the image field; lenses designed for the digital full-frame format will have the edge in performance, not only for digital camera use but also when used on film. At least we are not short of options. **AP**

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EF 400mm f5.6L USM	£1102.99
EF 500mm f4.0L IS USM	£5516.99
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EF 800mm f5.6L IS USM	£10002.99
EF-S 10-22mm f3.5-4.5 USM	£646.99
NEW! EF-S 15-85mm f3.5-5.6 IS USM	£652.99
EF 16-35mm f2.8L mk2 USM	£1154.99
EF 17-40mm f4.0L USM	£610.99
EF-S 17-55mm f4.0-5.6 IS USM	£407.99
EF-S 17-55mm f2.8 IS USM	£806.99
EF-S 18-55mm IS	£143.99

EF 70-200mm f2.8L IS USM	£1562.99 or £64 per month
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EF 50mm f1.2 L USM	£2032.99 or £83 per month
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EF 100mm f2.0	£380.99
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OLYMPUS E-SYSTEM



Olympus E-450

E-450 BODY ONLY	£306.99 or £13 mth
E-450 BODY + 14-42mm lens	£384.99 or £16 mth
E-450 BODY + 14-42mm + 40-150mm lens	£442.99 or £18 mth

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Olympus E-520

E-520 BODY ONLY	£306.99 or £13 mth
E-520 + 14-42mm lens	£357.99 or £15 mth
E-520 + 14-42mm + 40-150mm lens	£450.99 or £19 mth
E-520 + 14-42mm + 70-300mm lens	£627.99 or £26 mth

OLYMPUS E-SYSTEM



Olympus E-620

E-620 BODY ONLY	£484.99 or £20 mth
E-620 + 14-42mm lens	£593.99 or £25 mth
E-620 + 25mm lens	£622.99 or £26 mth
E-620 + 14-42mm + 40-150mm lens	£680.99 or £28 mth

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The NEW mirrorless Olympus E-P1. It's not a compact, it's not a DSLR - it's a pen! This compact, DSLR quality, hybrid device can record HD quality movies.

E-P1 Body Only	£560.99
E-P1 + 14-42mm	£586.99
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E-P1 + 17mm + 14-42mm	£724.99
17mm pancake	£295.99
14-42mm	£295.99



We sell all the retro accessories for this model on our website!

OLYMPUS Olympus E-30 & E-3 Kits available on our site!

E-30 Body Only	£738.99 or £30 mth
E-3 Body Only	£979.99 or £40 mth

SONY α 500



The 12.3 megapixel CMOS sensor records images in immaculate detail while the Exmor technology cuts noise in the processing phase. This model features a large 3.0" tilt 'Live-View' screen.

A500 BODY ONLY	£499.99 or £21 mth
A500 + 18-55mm	£555.99 or £23 mth
A500 + 18-55mm + 55-200mm	£714.99 or £29 mth

SONY α 550



Crisp, low-noise images packed with fine detail and vibrant colours. The Quick AF Live View now supports even speedier shooting responses with rapid, precise autofocus and face detection.

A550 BODY ONLY	£581.99 or £24 mth
A550 + 18-55mm	£642.99 or £27 mth
A550 + 18-55mm + 55-200mm	£795.99 or £33 mth

SONY α 850



"Full-frame DSLR shooting at a real-world price" - Sony press release 2009. The Sony Alpha A850 is a 24.6 megapixel full-frame DSLR that shares virtually all the major features of the flagship A900. The only differences obvious differences being 3fps continuous shooting and a slightly more compact viewfinder.

A850 BODY ONLY	£1683.99 or £69 mth
A850 + 28-75mm	£2098.99 or £85 mth

SONY α 900



The Sony Alpha a900 is a full-frame 24.6 megapixel DSLR with a fast and accurate 9-point AF with 10 focus assist points, 5fps continuous shooting at full resolution and a high resolution 3" Xtra Fine LCD. The digital SLR camera also features an "Exmor" CMOS sensor, an expandable ISO 200-3200 range and Steady Shot Inside. Steady Shot inside is an enhanced in-body optical stabilisation system which delivers up to 4 steps of anti-shake correction.

A900 BODY ONLY	£1940.99 or £79 mth
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SONY

Other Sony Kits available to buy online or by phone...

A230 + 18-55mm f3.5-5.6 DT lens	£349.99 or £15 mth
A230 + 18-55mm + 55-200mm	£489.99 or £20 mth

A380 BODY ONLY	£469.99 or £20 mth
A380 + 18-55mm f3.5-5.6 DT lens	£502.99 or £21 mth
A380 + 18-55mm + 55-200mm	£637.99 or £26 mth

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Available in Red, Blue, White or Black - see our website!

K-x + 18-55mm	£555.99 or £23 mth
K-x + 18-55mm + 55-300mm	£679.99 or £28 mth



Available in Red, Blue or Black - see our website!

K-7 BODY ONLY	£933.99 or £38 mth
K-7 + 18-55mm II	£1021.99 or £42 mth
K-7 + 18-55 II + 50-200mm	£1102.99 or £45 mth



Despite its compact size, the G1 features a large 3.0" 460,000 dot swivelling LCD screen, "Live View" 60fps electronic viewfinder with 1.4x magnification and 14mm eye relief. NB. This is Micro Four Thirds system DSLR.

G1 + 14-45 (Red, Blue or Black)	£472.99 or £20 mth
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Available in Red or Black - see our website!

DMC-GH1 + 14-140 (Red or Black)	£1097.99 or £45 mth
DMC-GH1 14-140 + DMW-MS1 Stereo Mic	£1097.99 or £45 mth
DMC-GH1+DMW-MS1 + 8GB SD+HDMI Cable	£1153.99 or £47 mth



Available in Red, Black or Silver - see our website!

GF1 BODY ONLY	£453.99 or £19 mth
GF1 + 14-45mm	£596.99 or £25 mth
GF1 + 20mm	£683.99 or £28 mth

SIGMA LENSES We are a Sigma Pro Lens stockist

4.5mm f2.8 EX DC HSM	£730.99
8mm f3.5 EX DG FishEye	£730.99
10mm f2.8 EX DC HSM	£571.99
15mm f2.8 EX DG FishEye	£567.99
20mm f1.8 EX DG	£486.99
24mm f1.8 EX DG	£405.99
28mm f1.8 EX DG	£326.99
30mm f1.4 EX DC HSM (62mm)	£393.99
50mm f2.8 EX DG Macro	£240.99
50mm f1.4 EX DG HSM (Sigma Fit)	£366.99
70mm f2.8 EX DG Macro	£382.99
105mm f2.8 EX DG Macro	£382.99
150mm f2.8 EX DG Macro	£576.99
180mm f3.5 EX DG HSM	£739.99
300mm f2.8 EX DG HSM	£2200.99
500mm f4.5 EX DG HSM	£3767.99
800mm f5.6 APO EX DG HSM	£5312.99
10-20mm f4.5-6.3 EX DC HSM	£400.99
NEW! 10-20mm f3.5 EX DC HSM	£531.99
12-24mm f4.5-5.6 EX DG	£689.99
17-70mm f2.8-4.5 DC Macro	£249.99
18-50mm f3.5-5.6 DC (Four Thirds Fit)	£75.99
18-50mm f3.5-5.6 DC (Canon/Pentax/Sigma/Minolta or Sony)	£77.99
18-50mm f3.5-5.6 DC (Nikon Fit)	£97.99
18-50mm f2.8 EX DC Macro A9 System	£318.99
18-50mm f2.8 EX DC (Canon Fit 72mm)	£325.99
18-50mm f2.8 HSM (Nikon Fit)	£318.99
NEW! 18-50mm f2.8-4.5 DC OS HSM	£244.99
18-125mm f3.8-5.6 DC OS HSM FROM	£254.99
18-200mm f3.5-6.3 DC	£219.99
18-200mm f3.5-6.3 DC OS	£290.99
18-250mm f3.5-6.3 DC OS HSM	£402.99
24-70mm f2.8 EX DG Macro	£750.99
28-300mm f3.5-6.3 DC MACRO	£254.99
50-150mm APO EX DG DC II	£572.99
NEW! 50-200mm f4.5-6.3 DC OS HSM	£203.99

50-500mm f4-6.3 EX DG II	£1081.99
70-200mm f2.8 APO EX DG Macro MkII	£659.99
70-300mm f4-5.6 DL Macro Super DG	£127.99
NEW! 70-300mm f4.5-6.3 DC OS	£316.99
100-300mm f4 EX IF DG	£1144.99
120-300mm f2.8 APO EX IF HSM DG	£2441.99
120-400mm f4.5-5.6 APO DG OS HSM	£607.99
150-500mm f5-6.3 APO DG OS HSM	£714.99
200-500mm f2.8 EX DG	£19413.99
300-800mm f5.6 EX DG APO HSM	£4707.99
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NEW! 60mm f2 Macro	£448.99
90mm SP Di Macro	£342.99
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300mm f2.8 AF SP (Canon Fit)	£2503.99
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17-50mm f2.8 AF XR Di II LD ASP IF	£335.99
18-200mm f3.5-6.3 AF XR Di II	£162.99
18-250mm Di I	£387.99
NEW! 18-270mm f3.5-6.3 Di II VC LD IF Macro	£458.99
28-75mm f2.8 SP AF Di	£356.99
28-80mm f3.5-5.6 AF	£96.99
28-200mm f3.8-5.6 AF XR Di ASP IF	£254.99
28-300mm AF XR Di	£306.99
28-300mm AF VC Di	£510.99
55-200mm f4.5-6.3 AF Di II LD Macro	£107.99
70-200mm f2.8 SP Di (Canon Fit)	£470.99
70-200mm f2.8 SP Di (Nikon/Sony/Pentax)	£607.99
70-300mm f4.5-6.3 AF Di LD Macro 1:2	£131.99
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20mm f2.8	£437.99
28mm f2.8	£180.99
NEW! 30mm f2.8 SAM Macro DT	£152.99
35mm f1.4G	£1071.99
50mm f1.4 AF	£288.99
NEW! 50mm f1.8 SAM	£136.99
50mm f2.8 AF Macro (D)	£415.99
NEW! 11-16mm f2.8 AF Planar T*	£1069.99
100mm f2.8 Macro AF (D)	£508.99
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300mm f2.8G	£4340.99
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11-18mm f4.5-5.6 DT AF (D) Lens	£477.99
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16-105mm f3.5-5.6	£436.99
18-200mm f3.5-6.3 DT AF (D) Lens	£396.99
18-250mm f3.5-6.3 Di II	£387.99
24-70mm f2.8 ZA	£1317.99
NEW! 28-75mm f2.8 SAM	£612.99
55-200mm f4.5-6.3	£193.99
70-300mm f4.5-5.6 G	£681.99
75-300mm f4.5-5.6 AF (D) Lens	£180.99

Tokina LENSES

Canon or Nikon Fit only:	
35mm f2.8 AT-X PRO DX AF Macro	£356.99
100mm f2.8 AT-X Macro	£374.99
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12-24mm f4 AT-X AF PRO DX II	£485.99
16-50mm f2.8 AT-X DX	£602.99
50-135mm f2.8 AT-X DX	£561.99
80-400mm f4.5-5.6 AT-X	£571.99

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40mm f2.8 DA SMC	£357.99
50mm f2.8 DA Macro SMC	£456.99
70mm f2.8 DA	£478.99
100mm f2.8 DA Macro SMC	£509.99
10-17mm f3.5-4.5 DA Fisheye	£475.99
12-24mm f4 DA ED AL IF	£959.99
16-45mm f4 DA ED AL SMC	£274.99
16-50mm f2.8 DA* ED	£795.99
17-70mm f4 AL DA IF SDM	£520.99
18-35mm f4.5-5.6 SMC FA J	£127.99
18-55mm MKII DA	£168.99
18-55mm f3.5-5.6 AL WR	£168.99
50-135mm f2.8 DA* ED	£908.99
50-200mm f4.5-6.3 ED AL WR	£199.99
55-300mm DA	£254.99
NEW! 60-250mm f4 ED IF SDM	£1123.99

OLYMPUS

8mm f3.5 Fisheye	£692.99
25mm Pancake Lens	£202.99
35mm f3.5 Macro	£202.99
50mm f2 Macro ZUIKO ED	£456.99
7-14mm f4 ZUIKO Digital	£1376.99
NEW! 9-18mm f4.5-5.6 ZUIKO ED	£453.99
11-22mm f2.8-3.5 ZUIKO Digital	£744.99
12-60mm ED f2.8-4.0 SWD	£846.99
NEW! 14-35mm f2.0 SWD ZUIKO Digital	£1775.99
14-42mm EZ f3.5-5.6	£295.99
14-54mm f2.8-3.5 ZUIKO Digital	£433.99
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35-100mm f2.0	£1936.99
50-200mm ED f2.8-3.5 SWD	£1011.99
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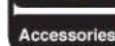
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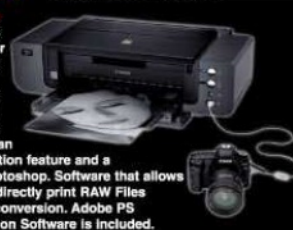
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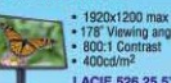
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Alpha Carl Zeiss T* DT 16-80mm f3.5-4.5	£395.00
Alpha DT 18-70mm 3.5-5.6	£49.90
Alpha 55-200mm f/4-5.6 DT	from £119.00

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AF 55-200mm f/4-5.6 LD Macro (Nikon)	£179.90



Gitzo G1378M Tripod Head	£169.90
Gitzo G1576M Off Centre Ball Head 4/5 Ser.	£120.00



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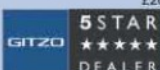
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Canon

EOS 1D Mark III (1)	£3,999.99	£2,599.00
CB-2LSE Charger (NB-1L & NB-1H) (2)	£59.00	£29.99
CB-910E Video Car Battery Charger (1)	£79.99	£49.99
CG-570 Battery Charger (BP-500) (2)	£114.99	£79.99
ERA-E1 Extended Range Antenna (4)	£189.99	£99.99
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Economy Satin Photo Paper 17" (9)	£58.74	£29.99
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MBAG100P Tripod Bag Padded (1)	£84.95	£74.95
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PL65 Silver (1)	£159.99	£139.99
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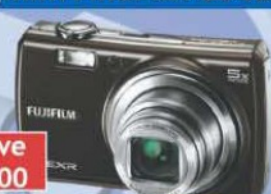


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Canon

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EOS 7D + EF-S 18-135mm IS	£2,099.00	£1,469.98
EOS 7D + EF-S 15-85mm IS	£2,399.99	£1,729.99
EOS 5D Mark II Body	£2,689.99	£1,699.99
EOS 5D + 24-105mm f/4 L IS	£3,599.99	£2,299.99
PowerShot S90	£449.00	£349.00
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BG-E6 Batt. Grip for EOS 5D Mk II	£274.99	£219.99
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EF-S 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6 - Non IS (UB)	£149.99	£59.99
EF-S 18-55mm f/3.5-5.6 IS (UB)	£209.99	£99.99
EF-S 18-135mm f/3.5-5.6 IS (UB)	£529.99	£269.99
EF-S 18-200mm f/3.5-5.6 IS (UB)	£699.99	£429.99
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E73 Lens Cap for EF 15mm f2.8 (2)	£19.99	£9.99
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NB-CP2L Battery Pack (8)	£74.00	£29.00
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Nikon

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D300S + AF-S 10-24mm f/3.5-4.5G DX ED	£2,299.98	£1,699.98
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MH18 A Quick charger for EN-EL3	£45.99	£34.99
CS-L01 case for Coolpix L18/L20	£19.99	£9.99
CS-PO5 Black Case for Coolpix P90	£32.99	£9.99
TC-E3ED Teleconverter Lens (2)	£232.99	£129.99
Camera Control Pro 2	£168.99	£129.99

Description	was	Sale Price
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SF-210 Slide Feeder for Coolscan 5000	£698.99	£499.99
AF-S 105mm f/2.8G VR IF-ED Micro	£749.99	£599.99
AF-S 10-24mm f/3.5-4.5G DX ED	£799.99	£679.99**
AF-S DX 16-85mm f3.5-5.6G ED VR	£549.99	£439.99
AF-S DX 18-55mm f3.5-5.6G VR (WB)	£179.99	£119.99
AF-S 18-105mm f/3.5-5.6G ED VR	£279.99	£180.00
AF-S 18-200mm f/3.5-5.6 IF ED DX VR(3)	£679.99	£499.00**
AF-S 55-200mm f/4-5.6 VR DX	£299.99	£229.99
AF-S 70-200mm f/2.8 G (IF) VR ED II	£1,999.99	£1,899.99
AF-S 200mm f/2G IF ED VR	£3,849.99	£2,999.00
TC-17E II 1.7x AF-S Teleconverter	£379.99	£299.99
TC-20E II 2.0x AF-S Teleconverter	£379.99	£299.99
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Spotting Scope RA III WP 65mm Green	£279.99	£169.99
Spotting Scope RA III WP 82mm Grey/Olive	£399.99	£219.99
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CASIO



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10.2" Digiframe (3)	£149.99	£79.99
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Exilim Pro EX-FS10 Red/Grey/Blue	£289.99	£129.99
Exilim EX-Z400 Brown/Pink/Silver	£249.99	£129.99
Exilim EX-Z1080 Pink (1 demo)	£166.37	£59.99
Exilim EX-Z29 Pink (1)	£129.99	£69.99
NP 20 Lithium Ion Battery	£34.25	£25.00
NP 50 Lithium Ion Battery (5)	£34.25	£25.00
Casio Soft Case for Exilim Z30/50/57(14)	£24.46	£4.00
EX-FH Case 1 Nylon Case for FH-20 (24)	£38.99	£19.49
EX-ZCase 1 Soft Leather Case (2)	£19.99	£5.00
EX-ZCase2 for Exilim Zoom Cameras (2)	£19.56	£7.50
EX-ZCase 3 Exilim Soft Case (31)	£19.99	£5.00
EX-SCase-2 Case for S500/S600 (12)	£19.56	£5.00
ESC-150BK Leather Case for EX - F1	£34.99	£17.49
EX-CASEBD1 for EX Z Series (72)	£14.67	£5.00
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Casio EX-ZCaseC Blue Semi-Hard Case for S770/Z1050/Z75/Z100/Z700	£9.99	£4.99
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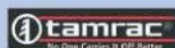
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Master Classic Complete (1)	£185.99	£89.99
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5682 Digital Zoom 2 Blue (1)	£27.99	£20.00
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T026 Black	£19.99 16ml	£3.99 20ml, 3 for £10.99	Photo 810, 830, 830u, 925, 935
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T0341/8, each	£14.99 17ml	Not Available.	
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T0441-454 Set of 4	£40.99	£14.99 , 3 sets for £42.99	C64, C66, C84, C86, CX3600/3650, CX4600, CX6600
T0441 Black	£17.99 13ml	£4.99 21ml, 3 for £13.99	
T0452/3/4, each	£9.99 8ml	£3.99 21ml, 3 for £10.99	R200, R220, R300, R320, R340
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T0612/3/4, each	£8.99 8ml	£3.99 21ml, 3 for £10.99	PX650, PX700/710W, PX800/810FW
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T0711 Black	£8.99 7.4ml	£4.99 13ml, 3 for £13.99	
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T0791-796 Set of 6	£70.99	Check Website.	Photo R2880
T0791/2/3, each	£11.99 10ml	Check Website.	
T0794/5/6, each	£11.99 10ml	Check Website.	
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T0870 Gloss	£7.99 11.4ml	Check Website.	
T0871/2/3/4, each	£9.99 11.4ml	Check Website.	
T0877/8/9, each	£9.99 11.4ml	Check Website.	
T0961-969 Set of 8	£78.99	Not Available.	
T0961/2/3, each	£9.99 11.4ml	Not Available.	
T0964/5/6, each	£9.99 11.4ml	Not Available.	
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EPSON Stylus Pro 4000, 4400, 7600, 9600	
T5431/5432/5433/5434/5435/5436/5437/5438 110ml each	£44.99
T5441/5442/5443/5444/5445/5446/5447/5448 220ml each	£69.99
EPSON Stylus Pro 4800, 4880:	
T6051/6052/6053/6054/6055/6056/6057/6138/6059 110ml	£44.99
T6061/6062/6063/6064/6065/6066/6067/6148/6069 220ml	£69.99
EPSON Stylus Pro 7800, 7880, 9800:	
T6021/6022/6023/6024/6025/6026/6027/6118/6029 110ml	£44.99
T6031/6032/6033/6034/6035/6036/6037/6128/6039 220ml	£69.99

Please call or check our website for further details

EAQ: Prices may be subject to change, but hopefully not!



Canon Compatibles

BCI3e Black 26ml	£2.99
BCI3e CMY 15ml	£2.99
BCI6 B/C/M/Y 15ml	£2.99
PGI5 Black 29ml	£2.99
PGI5 B/C/M/Y 15ml	£2.99
CL18 B/C/M/Y 15ml	£4.99
CL18 B/C/M/Y 15ml	£4.99
PGI520 B/C/M/Y 19ml	£5.99
CL1521 B/C/M/Y/GY 9ml	£4.99
BCI10 Black (3 pack)	£4.99
BCI15 Black (2 pack)	£4.99
BCI15 Colour (2 pack)	£5.99
BCI24 Black 9ml	£1.99
BCI24 Colour 16ml	£2.99
PG37 Black 12ml	£12.99
PG50 Black 28ml	£12.99
CL38 Colour 12ml	£12.99
CL51 Colour 24ml	£14.99

Canon Originals

BCI16 Colour (2 pack)	£21.99
BCI3e Black 26ml	£10.99
BCI3e CMY 13ml	£9.99
BCI6 B/C/M/Y 13ml	£9.99
BCI6 B/C/M/Y 13ml	£9.99
PGI5 Black 26ml	£12.99
CL18 B/C/M/Y 13ml	£11.99
CL18 B/C/M/Y 13ml	£11.99
PGI7 Black 25ml	£11.99
PGI9 Clear 191ml	£11.99
PGI9 B/C/M/Y 14ml	£10.99
PGI9 B/C/M/Y/GY 14ml	£10.99
PGI520 Black 19ml	£9.99
CL1521 B/C/M/Y/GY 9ml	£8.99
PG37 Black 11ml	£12.99
PG40 Black 16ml	£15.99
PG50 Black 22ml	£22.99
PG510 Black 9ml NEW	£11.99
PG512 Black 15ml NEW	£15.99
CL38 Colour 9ml	£16.99
CL41 Colour 12ml	£19.99
CL51 Colour 21ml	£26.99
CL52 Photo 21ml	£19.99
CL511 Colour 9ml NEW	£15.99
CL513 Colour 3ml NEW	£19.99
KP-36IP Ink & Paper	£12.99
KP-108IP Ink & Paper	£29.99

Many more in stock!

Dell Compatibles

Series 1 Black (T0529)	£11.99
Series 1 Black (T0530)	£12.99
Series 5 Black (M4646)	£11.99
Series 5 Black (M4646)	£12.99

Many more in stock!



HP Compatibles

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No.21 Black 20ml	£8.99
No.22 Colour 21ml	£11.99
No.27 Black 24ml	£9.99
No.28 Colour 24ml	£12.99
No.45 Black 45ml	£4.99
No.56 Black 45ml	£4.99
No.57 Colour 24ml	£12.99
No.58 Photo 24ml	£12.99
No.78 Colour 45ml	£9.99
No.88XL Black 58ml	£9.99
No.88XL CMY 17ml	£8.99
No.110 Colour 12ml	£10.99
No.336 Black 10ml	£7.99
No.337 Black 24ml	£10.99
No.338 Black 24ml	£10.99
No.339 Black 34ml	£12.99
No.342 Colour 12ml	£10.99
No.343 Colour 21ml	£12.99
No.344 Colour 21ml	£14.99
No.348 Photo 21ml	£12.99
No.363 Black 20ml	£6.99
No.363 CMY/PC/PM 8ml	£4.99
No.363 Set of 6	£24.99

HP Originals

No.21 Black 5ml	£13.99
No.22 Colour 5ml	£15.99
No.38 B/C/M/Y 27ml	£26.99
No.38 CMY/PC/PM 27ml	£26.99
No.56 Black 18ml	£16.99
No.57 Colour 17ml	£24.99
No.58 Photo 17ml	£22.99
No.59 Grey 17ml	£22.99
No.100 Grey 15ml	£22.99
No.110 Colour 5ml	£18.99
No.300 Colour 4ml	£11.99
No.300 Colour 4ml	£13.99
No.336 Black 5ml	£13.99
No.337 Black 11ml	£17.99
No.338 Black 11ml	£17.99
No.339 Black 21ml	£24.99
No.342 Colour 5ml	£15.99
No.343 Colour 7ml	£18.99
No.344 Colour 14ml	£26.99
No.348 Photo 13ml	£22.99
No.350 Black 4.5ml	£13.99
No.350XL Black 25ml	£27.99
No.351 Colour 3.5ml	£15.99
No.351XL Colour 14ml	£29.99
No.363 Black 6ml	£13.99
No.363 CMY/PC/PM	£8.99
No.363 Set of 6	£39.99
No.364 Black 6ml	£8.99
No.364 B/C/M/Y 3ml	£7.99
No.901 Black 4ml	£11.99
No.901 Colour 9ml	£16.99

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Lexmark Compatibles

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No.2 Colour	£11.99
No.3 Black	£10.99
No.16 Black	£10.99
No.17 Black	£9.99
No.26 Colour	£12.99
No.27 Colour	£11.99
No.31 Photo	£9.99
No.32 Black	£11.99
No.34 Colour	£11.99
No.35 Colour	£12.99

Lexmark Originals

No.1 Colour	£16.99
No.14 Black	£16.99
No.15 Colour	£18.99
No.17 Black	£13.99
No.23 Black	£14.99
No.24 Colour	£16.99
No.27 Colour	£14.99
No.28 Black	£13.99
No.29 Colour	£14.99
No.31 Photo	£24.99
No.32 Black	£15.99
No.33 Colour	£17.99
No.34 Black	£20.99
No.35 Colour	£24.99
No.36 Black	£16.99
No.37 Colour	£18.99
No.43 Colour	£22.99
No.44 Black	£18.99

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LC900 CMY	£2.99
LC900 Set of 4	£11.99
LC970 Black	£3.99
LC970 CMY	£2.99
LC970 Set of 4	£11.99
LC1000 Black	£3.99
LC1000 CMY	£2.99
LC1000 Set of 4	£11.99
LC980 / 1100 Black	£3.99
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SCREW-TYPE FILTERS

KOOD

Japanese Optical Glass Filters
Coated to reduce lens flare and reflections.

UV / Haze Filters

Used both to protect the lens of your camera, and to absorb ultraviolet rays that can cause photos to appear hazy.

46mm UV / Haze	£5.99
52mm UV / Haze	£5.99
55mm UV / Haze	£5.99
58mm UV / Haze	£7.99
62mm UV / Haze	£8.99
67mm UV / Haze	£9.99
72mm UV / Haze	£11.99
77mm UV / Haze	£14.99
82mm UV / Haze	£17.99
86mm UV / Haze	£22.99

More sizes in stock, from 24 to 86mm!

Circular Polarising Filters

These remove reflections from surfaces such as glass and water, as well as increasing contrast and saturation.

46mm Circular Polarizing	£17.99
52mm Circular Polarizing	£17.99
55mm Circular Polarizing	£19.99
58mm Circular Polarizing	£21.99
62mm Circular Polarizing	£24.99
67mm Circular Polarizing	£27.99
72mm Circular Polarizing	£34.99
77mm Circular Polarizing	£39.99
82mm Circular Polarizing	£44.99
86mm Circular Polarizing	£49.99

More sizes in stock, from 27 to 86mm!

Skylight Filters

These work in a very similar way to a UV filter, but have a pinkish tint to add a gentle warmth to your photos.

46mm SkyLight	£6.99
52mm SkyLight	£6.99
55mm SkyLight	£7.99
58mm SkyLight	£8.99
62mm SkyLight	£9.99
67mm SkyLight	£10.99
72mm SkyLight	£12.99
77mm SkyLight	£15.99
82mm SkyLight	£18.99
86mm SkyLight	£24.99

More sizes in stock, from 30 to 105mm!

Close Up Filter Sets

Sets containing three filters, rated at +1, +2, and +4 diopters, increases close up / macro ability of the lens they are fitted to.

52mm Close-Up Set	£25.99
55mm Close-Up Set	£28.99
58mm Close-Up Set	£32.99
62mm Close-Up Set	£37.99
67mm Close-Up Set	£44.99

More sizes in stock, from 46 to 77mm!

Neutral Density Filters

Used to reduce the amount of light passing through the lens, reducing shutter speed without affecting colour contrast or balance.

52mm ND4 / ND8	£10.99
55mm ND4 / ND8	£12.99
58mm ND4 / ND8	£14.99
62mm ND4 / ND8	£16.99
67mm ND4 / ND8	£19.99
72mm ND4 / ND8	£24.99
77mm ND4 / ND8	£29.99

More sizes in stock, from 37 to 82mm!

Starburst Filters

These add a dramatic star cross flare to bright light sources, such as streetlights. They also give a slight soft focus effect.

52mm Starburst x4/8/16	£11.99
58mm Starburst x4/8/16	£15.99
67mm Starburst x4/8/16	£21.99
72mm Starburst x4/8/16	£27.99

We stock many other filter types, including multi-image, fog, split-field, red, orange, yellow and green filters in a range of sizes.

MARUMI

Marumi Digital High Grade (DHG) filters have an extra-thin, low-profile frame, to help prevent vignetting. Multiple digital anti-reflection coatings and black-rimmed Japanese optical glass, combined with a satin frame, further reduce unwanted reflections, ghosting and flare.

DHG Lens Protection

52mm DHG Lens Protect	£12.99
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58mm DHG Lens Protect	£14.99
62mm DHG Lens Protect	£16.99
67mm DHG Lens Protect	£18.99
72mm DHG Lens Protect	£21.99
77mm DHG Lens Protect	£24.99
82mm DHG Lens Protect	£27.99

DHG Circular Polarisers

52mm DHG Circ. Polarizing	£35.99
55mm DHG Circ. Polarizing	£38.99
58mm DHG Circ. Polarizing	£41.99
62mm DHG Circ. Polarizing	£46.99
67mm DHG Circ. Polarizing	£49.99
72mm DHG Circ. Polarizing	£55.99
77mm DHG Circ. Polarizing	£61.99
82mm DHG Circ. Polarizing	£74.99

STEPPING RINGS

Step-Up and Step-Down Rings

Stepping rings are used to "step-up" or "step-down" from one filter thread size to another.

27-30mm	52-46mm	58-55mm	67-58mm
34-37mm	52-55mm	58-62mm	67-62mm
37-43mm	52-58mm	58-67mm	67-77mm
43-46mm	55-52mm	62-58mm	72-67mm
46-49mm	55-58mm	62-67mm	72-77mm
49-52mm	58-52mm	62-72mm	77-72mm

All just £4.99 each!



This is just a tiny fraction of our range. Over 160 different sizes in stock, from 25mm to 105mm. Probably the largest selection in the UK.

MACRO PHOTOGRAPHY

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These fit to the camera body, between the camera and lens, leaving a screw thread to enable the reverse mounting of lenses. A way of obtaining a high reproduction ratio, allowing extreme Macro photography.

Canon: 52mm, 55mm, 58mm	
Nikon: 52mm, 55mm, 58mm	
Pentax K: 52mm, 55mm, 58mm	
Olympus: 52mm, 55mm, 58mm	
Sony: 52mm, 55mm, 58mm	

Coupling Rings - £11.99

Used to attach two lenses together via their filter threads, achieving high magnifications.

52-52mm, 52-55mm, 52-58mm	
55-55mm, 55-58mm, 58-58mm	

T2 Mounts - £12.99

Canon, Nikon, Sony, Oly, Pentax

Extension Tubes

Set of 3 tubes. They contain no optics, they simply move the lens further from the camera body, allowing closer focusing.

Canon (Manual)	£17.99
Canon (Autofocus)	£129.99
Nikon (Manual)	£17.99
Nikon (Autofocus)	£129.99
Sony (Manual)	£17.99
Sony (Autofocus)	£129.99

Extension Bellows

Acting like an adjustable set of extension tubes, they allow fine control over focusing distance.

Canon £49.99	
Nikon £49.99	

Series 7 Rings, Rollie Rings and Hasselblad Rings also in stock.

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4GB Sandisk, Ultra II	£14.99
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A range of protective shock-resistant rubber lined memory card cases to keep your memory cards safe and secure.

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Camera Batteries

A comprehensive range of rechargeable Li-ion batteries. Manufactured by respected independent battery manufacturers Energizer and Duracell. All batteries come with a 2 year guarantee.

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NB-6L for Canon	£9.99
NB-7L for Canon	£12.99
BP-511 for Canon	£12.99
LP-E5 for Canon	£12.99
NP20 for Casio	£9.99
NP40 for Casio	£9.99
NP60 for Casio	£9.99
NP40 for Fuji	£9.99
NP45 for Fuji	£9.99
NP50 for Fuji	£9.99
NP60 for Fuji	£9.99
NP70 for Fuji	£9.99
NP80 for Fuji	£9.99
NP95 for Fuji	£9.99
NP120 for Fuji	£9.99
NP140 for Fuji	£12.99
NP150 for Fuji	£14.99
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EN-EL2 for Nikon	£9.99
EN-EL3/3A for Nikon	£15.99
EN-EL3E for Nikon	£15.99
EN-EL5 for Nikon	£9.99
EN-EL7 for Nikon	£19.99
EN-EL8 for Nikon	£9.99
EN-EL9 for Nikon	£12.99
EN-EL10 for Nikon	£9.99
EN-EL11 for Nikon	£9.99
EN-EL12 for Nikon	£9.99
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LI50B for Olympus	£9.99
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CGA-S005 for Panasonic	£9.99
CGR-S006 for Panasonic	£9.99
CGA-S007 for Panasonic	£9.99
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Many more batteries in stock!

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A range of professional battery grips from Hahnel. All can take two Li-ion batteries for double the battery power. AA battery compartment and/or vertical shutter release and/or infrared remote, depending on model.

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For Canon 350/400D	£59.99
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For Canon 450/500/1000D	£69.99
+1x LP-E5: £81.99 +2x LP-E5: £93.99	
For Nikon D40/D60	£59.99
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For Nikon D80/D90	£89.99
+1x EN-EL3E: £104.99 +2x EN-EL3E: £119.99	
For Nikon D300/D700	£139.99
+1x EN-EL3E: £154.99 +2x EN-EL3E: £169.99	
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This is just a sample, more in stock!

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High-power Ni-MH rechargeable AA and AAA batteries - all sold in packs of 4.

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AAA 1000mAh Energizer	£6.99
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AA 2450mAh Energizer	£7.99
AA 2650mAh Duracell	£7.99
Charger +2500mAh Energizer	£9.99

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New technology, combining the benefits of Alkaline and Ni-MH rechargeable batteries. They come pre-charged, retain 90% of their charge after 6 months, and last 4 times as long as alkaline batteries!

AAA 850mAh equivalent (4)	£5.99
AA 2050mAh equivalent (4)	£7.99

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Energizer Ultimate Lithium: The longest lasting AA and AAA batteries in the world!

AAA Ultimate Lithium (4)	£6.99
AA Ultimate Lithium (4)	£6.99

Universal Charger

The NEW Hahnel UniPal charger is able to charge AA, AAA, Li-ion batteries, cameras, phones, iPods and more! Mains power cable, plus 12V car charger. Full details on our website.

	£29.99
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Li-Ion Charger

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Coin Cells, etc

A comprehensive range of specialist batteries - see our website for full range.

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SQUARE FILTERS

P-Type Filter System

The P-Type square/rectangular filter system consists of three parts:



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FLASH DIFFUSERS

Inverted Dome Pro Flash Diffuser Set

Comprising a clear vinyl body that simply slips onto the head of the flash gun, and an inverted frosted dome that clips onto the front.

In addition to diffusing the flash directly hitting your subject, the inverted dome spreads light evenly through the sides of the clear vinyl body, lighting up the surrounding environment, thus producing a natural soft daylight effect. Especially useful for shooting interiors and portraits, and is a firm favourite with wedding photographers.

Supplied with four domes - neutral, yellow, amber and blue, giving you a full range of natural, cool, or warm-up tones. Available in four sizes, to fit the heads of most flash guns:

Size 1: 62-65 x 39-42mm Nikon SB600, SB800, etc
Size 2: 64-68 x 35-38mm Canon 420EX, 430EX, etc
Size 3: 68-72 x 46-49mm Nikon SB600, 27, 28, etc
Size 4: 73-77 x 46-49mm Canon 580EX, 580EX, etc

£29.95

Bounce Flash Diffuser

These popular, simple opaque plastic diffusers simply fit onto the front of your flash gun, creating a diffused but built effect with even coverage. Huge range available for Canon, Nikon, Sony, Olympus, Pentax, Metz & Nissin. Below is just a sample of the range:

Canon 270EX / 380EX / 420EX
Canon 430EX / 430EXII / 580EX
Canon 580EX / 580EXII
Nikon SB600 / SB800 / SB900
Nikon SB24 / SB25 / SB26 / SB28
Sony: HVL-F42AM / HVL-F58AM, Metz: 48AF1 / 58AF1
Nissin: Di466 / Di622 / Di866, Pentax: AF-540FGZ



£10.95

Camera Built-in Flash Diffuser Set

A flash diffuser that slots into the camera hotshoe, and mounts a contoured diffuser plate in front of the built-in flash on SLR cameras. Not compatible with Sony cameras.

Height adjustable, and supplied with neutral, amber, and blue diffuser plates.

£9.95

RING FLASH

Marumi DRF14 Ring Flash

The highly-acclaimed Marumi Ring Flash is a true ring flash - it consists of a main control unit and a separate ring light which connects to the lens filter thread. This unit is ideal for Macro/Close-up photography due to the flash light being positioned directly between the camera lens and subject for even illumination. The flash has a 14mm/ISO100 guide number and features auto TTL exposure. The lens mount is 52mm, step-up rings are also supplied for 50mm, 55mm, 58mm and 67mm fittings. Available in Nikon Fit, with TTL metering and Canon Fit, with E-TTL and E-TTL II metering.

In a glowing report in the June 2009 issue of *Photo Plus* magazine, the Marumi Ring Flash was described as "great value" and was ranked above two other ring flash units costing in the region of £300!

£109.95



FLASH GUNS

Nissin

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TWENTY FREE AA BATTERIES
...worth £15 with every Nissin Flash Gun!

Nissin Di466 Speedlite (GN:33)

An advanced and versatile flash gun, with a guide number of 33m/ISO100, 46m/ISO200 at 1/160sec. Featuring the latest TTL flash control technology, specification includes adjustable bounce flash head, wide angle diffuser and catch light reflector, wireless remote slave flash on manual mode and energy saving auto-off circuit.

Available in Nikon Fit, with TTL metering and Canon Fit, with E-TTL and E-TTL II metering.

RRP: £149.95 Save: £59.00
£90.95

TWENTY FREE AA BATTERIES



Nissin Di622 Speedlite (GN:44)

An impressively powerful flash gun, with a guide number of 44m/ISO100, 62m/ISO200 at 1/160sec. Incredible specification, including bounce and swivel flash head, wide angle diffuser and catch light reflector, wireless slave flash with power ratio, active AF assist light and energy saving auto-off circuit.

Available in Nikon Fit, with TTL metering and Canon Fit, with E-TTL and E-TTL II metering.

RRP: £169.95 Save: £67.00
£102.95

TWENTY FREE AA BATTERIES



Nissin Di866 Speedlite (GN:60)

The Nissin Di866 Professional Flashgun is an extremely powerful flashgun (guide number of 60m/ISO100) with an easy to read LCD panel, making this advanced unit very easy to use. Designed for use with Canon and Nikon digital SLRs, the Nissin Di866 fully supports Canon's E-TTL and Nikon's i-TTL functionality with the option for full manual overrides. Covering a range of focal lengths from 24-105mm and including a secondary fit in flash unit, the Nissin Di866 is the flashgun professionals have been waiting for. A built in USB port means upgrades can be downloaded via an internet connection.

Available in Nikon Fit, with TTL metering and Canon Fit, with E-TTL and E-TTL II metering.

£224.95

TWENTY FREE AA BATTERIES



Nissin SC-01 Universal Flash Shoe Cord

An incredibly useful Universal Flash Shoe Cord, with 1.5m coiled cable, allowing off camera flash photography. It has a multiple pin configuration, allowing it to retain full TTL compatibility between camera and flash on Canon, Nikon, Fujifilm, Pentax and Samsung DSLRs. The TTL shoe which fits to the main camera body features a secondary hot shoe enabling you to attach 2 flash units, one on the top of the camera and another off to the side.

£47.95



We stock Metz flash guns for Canon, Nikon, Sony, Samsung, Olympus and Pentax

36 AF-4

Guide Number: 36m / ISO100

£72.95

48 AF-1

Guide Number: 48m / ISO100

£175.95

58 AF-1

Guide Number: 58m / ISO100

£289.95

1 tamrac



Expedition Backpack
Tamrac's famous range of Expedition backpacks have recently been upgraded and continue to lead the way in carrying huge amounts of camera kit in comfort! Fully MAS compatible.

Expedition 4X £67.95
Expedition 5X £82.95
Expedition 6X £95.95
Expedition 7X £119.95
Expedition 8X £137.95



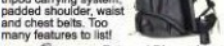
Velocity Sling
A unique design of sling backpack, that opens away from your body for even faster access to your gear!

Velocity 6X £29.95
Velocity 7X £36.95
Velocity 8X £42.95
Velocity 9X £49.95
Velocity 10X £59.95



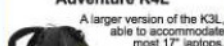
Modular Accessory System
The patented Tamrac Modular Accessory System (MAS) allows photographers to customise their bags using accessories that attach to MAS slots on Tamrac bags.

Water Bottle With Holder £9.95
Lens Case Pro 50 £11.95
Lens Case Pro 100 £12.95
Lens Case Pro 200 £13.95
Flash Case Medium £8.95
Flash Case Large £9.95
Rain Cover Large £17.95
Rain Cover Large MAS Belt Medium £15.95



Aero Speed Pack
Dual access, dual compartment photo backpacks, with front and side openings.

SpeedPack 75 £56.95
SpeedPack 85 £75.95



Adventure K3L
A spacious camera section at the bottom, separate daypack section at the top, and dedicated 15.4" laptop compartment behind. Hidden rain cover, tripod carrying system, padded shoulder, waist and chest belts. Too many features to list!

External Dimensions: 30.5 x 36.8 x 48.3cm
Interior Dimensions: Laptop Compartment: 28.0 x 3.8 x 35.5cm
Camera Compartment: 16.5 x 29.2 x 15.2cm

£69.95



Adventure K4L
A larger version of the K3L, able to accommodate most 17" laptops.

External Dimensions: 33.0 x 35.0 x 52.1cm
Interior Dimensions: Laptop Compartment: 33.0 x 3.8 x 40.6cm
Camera Compartment: 19.0 x 29.8 x 17.8cm

£82.95



Sahara 115F
A shoulder bag large enough to take a 15" laptop.

£59.95



UrbanGear U30
The U30 is a lightweight camera backpack that can hold a plethora of equipment: the main compartment can accommodate a DSLR (such as the Nikon D60 or Canon 1000D) with up to a 70-200 lens attached, as well as 2-3 additional lenses.

External Dimensions: 25.4 x 29.2 x 20.3cm
Internal Dimensions: 22.9 x 26.7 x 11.4cm

£29.95



UrbanGear U60
Medium camera backpack, capable of holding a medium-sized DSLR with 80-400 lens attached. The camera compartment is also removable.

External Dimensions: 30.5 x 26.0 x 19.0cm
Internal Dimensions: 26.7 x 24.8 x 12.7cm

£39.95



UrbanGear U120
Large camera backpack, capable of holding a large camera system with accessories, with a separate 15" laptop compartment.

External Dimensions: 44.5 x 31.8 x 28.6cm
Internal Dimensions: 36.2 x 26.7 x 13.3cm

£69.95

CAMERA BAGS



Kata 3N1 Sling

This unique range of bags provides three carrying options in one, morphing from sling to backpack and back again quickly and easily by use of its quick release buckles.

In sling position, the bag easily swings around from back to front to achieve quick draw access to your main camera and lenses.

In backpack position you can comfortably carry your equipment for long distance walking when needed. The included chest belt and balancing hip strap helps take the load of your heavy equipment off your shoulders.

Arrange your equipment in the bottom main compartment of the pack taking full advantage of the modular dividers to custom fit the bag to your exact equipment, while the large top compartment can be used as a daypack or for holding additional camera gear. Two external pockets allow quick access to accessories without opening the main compartments. The included rain cover folds neatly away into an integrated pocket.



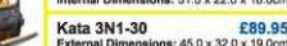
Kata 3N1-10
External Dimensions: 41.0 x 22.0 x 16.5cm
Internal Dimensions: 28.5 x 19.0 x 15.0cm

Kata 3N1-20
External Dimensions: 44.0 x 23.5 x 19.0cm
Internal Dimensions: 31.5 x 22.0 x 16.0cm

Kata 3N1-30
External Dimensions: 45.0 x 32.0 x 19.0cm
Internal Dimensions: 32.5 x 29.5 x 16.0cm

Kata 3N1-10 £65.95
Kata 3N1-20 £73.95
Kata 3N1-30 £89.95

NEW PRODUCT - Kata 3N1-33
Based in the award-winning 3N1-30, the new 3N1-33 has additional features, the most notable being a 15" laptop compartment. See website for details.

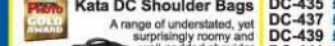


Kata 3N1-Tripod Holder £12.95
For Kata 3N1 bags.

IMPROVED - Kata DPS Digital Rucksack

The Kata DPS Digital Rucksack gives top level protection to two DSLRs with mounted lenses, 3-4 single lenses, a flash, as well as your personal items. The rucksack can be converted from a camera bag into a daypack when not shooting by removing the padded bottom camera insert. When used as a camera bag, the main compartment will hold your DSLR in a top grip position while the modular dividers system separates, organises and protects your lenses, flashes and other accessories. There is an included rain cover which folds neatly away, and an ergonomic chest belt and balancing waist strap for maximum comfort while transporting your gear.

DR-465i £57.95 DR-466i £64.95 DR-467i £72.95



Kata DC Shoulder Bags
A range of understated, yet surprisingly roomy and well-padded shoulder bags, each including a detachable rain cover.

DC-435 £26.95 DC-437 £28.95
DC-439 £31.95 DC-441 £33.95
DC-443 £39.95 DC-445 £42.95

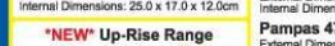


Vanguard Peking Shoulder Bag
Shoulder bags, with separate carrying handle and shoulder strap. Capable of carrying most DSLRs with kit lens attached. Two separate compartments keep your accessories safe, tidy and well protected.

Peking 21 £18.95
External Dimensions: 29.0 x 22.0 x 17.0cm
Internal Dimensions: 21.0 x 15.0 x 11.0cm

Peking 25 £21.95
External Dimensions: 34.0 x 23.0 x 19.5cm
Internal Dimensions: 25.0 x 17.0 x 12.0cm

***NEW* Up-Rise Range**
Up-Rise 34 Slingbag £49.95
Up-Rise 43 Slingbag £59.95
Up-Rise 45 Backpack £79.95
Up-Rise 48 Backpack £89.95

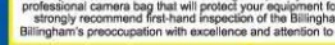


Vanguard Pampas Sling Backpack
A range of innovative sling backpacks, with day pack at the top and separate camera section at the bottom. The bag sits comfortably on your back, and when needed, it revolves round to your front for easy access to your camera, without having to take the bag off. Additionally, the bag then provides a secure platform for lens changing or photo taking.

Pampas 37 £29.95
External Dimensions: 34.0 x 21.5 x 21.5cm
Internal Dimensions: 17.0 x 19.0 x 13.0cm

Pampas 47 £35.95
External Dimensions: 42.0 x 21.5 x 21.5cm
Internal Dimensions: 20.0 x 19.0 x 13.0cm

Pampas 57 £39.95
External Dimensions: 44.5 x 24.0 x 22.0cm
Internal Dimensions: 30.0 x 22.0 x 15.0cm



Billingham
We are proud to announce that we have been appointed as an Authorised Billingham Specialist Centre.

Billingham's exquisite range of hand-made camera bags are now on display in our recently extended showroom in Leamington Spa. If you are considering investing in a professional camera bag that will protect your equipment for many years to come, we strongly recommend first-hand inspection of the Billingham range - only then can Billingham's preoccupation with excellence and attention to detail be fully appreciated.

The Hadley Pro
Based on the Hadley Original, the Hadley Pro features a number of additional features, including a carrying handle and waterproofed zippered back pocket. Available in Khaki & Tan, Sage & Tan, Black & Tan, and Black & Black.

The Hadley Pro £134.95

More Billingham Bags
NEW Billingham T.8 £129.95
NEW Billingham F.4 £139.95
The Hadley Digital £189.95
The Packington £399.95

Billingham Accessories
Superflex Inserts (all) £12.95
Shoulder Pads £17.95
Tripod Straps £14.95

The 5 Series
A firm favourite with serious photographers the world over, the '5 Series' range comprises four sizes of bag, available in Khaki & Tan, Black & Tan, or Black & Black.

Billingham 225 £199.95
Billingham 335 £209.95
Billingham 445 £229.95
Billingham 555 £249.95

The 07 Range
New Billingham bags for 2009, constructed from Fibrelite - a lighter alternative to traditional Canvas. Available in Khaki & Chocolate or Black & Black.

Billingham 107 £209.95
Billingham 207 £219.95
Billingham 307 £239.95

LIGHT METERS, TRIGGERS

SEKONIC

L208 TwinMaster
Analogous, incident and reflected, ambient light only.

£69.95

Sekonic L308S FlashMate
Digital, incident and reflected, ambient and flash light.

£129.95

Sekonic L358 FlashMaster
Digital, incident and reflected, simultaneous ambient and flash light, rotating head.

£209.95

We are an official Authorised Sekonic Demonstration Centre, and have the Sekonic range on display and available for demonstration in our showroom in Leamington Spa.

L398A Deluxe III
£132.95

L758DR DigitalMaster
£439.95

GOSSEN

Gossen DigiSix
£119.95

Gossen DigiFlash
£139.95

Gossen DigiPro F
WAS £199.95
£149.95

PocketWizard Mini TT1
£209.95

PocketWizard Flex TT5
£229.95

PocketWizard Plus II
£169.95

PC-1 MP-1
£8.95

CM-N3 N90-M3
£13.95
£96.95
£64.95

PocketWizard Plus II Twin Set
£229.95

PocketWizard MultiMax
£229.95

Lowering the Cost of Photography

Orders are shipped promptly by Royal Mail 1st class post, for which we charge just £1.72 per order. All prices include VAT, and a full VAT receipt is provided with every order. Payment accepted by credit/debit card, cheque or postal order. Orders accepted securely online, www.premier-ink.co.uk, over the telephone, 01926 339977, by post, or by visiting our new showroom: Premier Ink & Photographic, Longfield Road, Sydenham Industrial Estate, Leamington Spa, Warwickshire. CV31 1XB.

01926 339977 **www.premier-ink.co.uk**



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Ink & Photographic

TRIPODS, MONOPODS & HEADS

SHUTTER RELEASES

Tripod & Head Special Deals

190XDB Tripod
056 Three Way Head
2-Axis Spirit Level

RRP: £99.95
RRP: £29.95
RRP: £29.95

Special Deal Price:
£89
SAVING £70 While Stocks Last

055XDB Tripod
222 Grip Ball Head
3-Axis Spirit Level

RRP: £119.95
RRP: £89.95
RRP: £34.95

Special Deal Price:
£139
SAVING £105 While Stocks Last

MANFROTTO TRIPODS			
190XPROB Tripod Aluminum 3-section legs, Q90 column Weight: 1.85kg Load: 5.0kg Folded: 57cm Height: 146cm £92.95	055XPROB Tripod Aluminum 3-section legs, Q90 column Weight: 2.40kg Load: 7.0kg Folded: 65cm Height: 178cm £112.95	190CXPRO3 Carbon Fibre 3-section legs, Q90 column Weight: 1.29kg Load: 5.0kg Folded: 58cm Height: 146cm £209.95	190CXPRO4 Carbon Fibre 4-section legs, Q90 column Weight: 1.34kg Load: 5.0kg Folded: 50cm Height: 146cm £219.95
055CXPRO3 Carbon Fibre 3-section legs, Q90 column Weight: 1.34kg Load: 8.0kg Folded: 65cm Height: 175cm £239.95	055CXPRO4 Carbon Fibre 4-section legs, Q90 column Weight: 1.70kg Load: 8.0kg Folded: 54cm Height: 170cm £249.95		

MANFROTTO MONOPODS			
790B Monopod Aluminum 5-section Weight: 0.29kg Load: 1.0kg Folded: 39cm Height: 145cm £21.95	776YB Monopod Aluminum 4-section Weight: 0.33kg Load: 4.5kg Folded: 48cm Height: 152cm £29.95	695CX Monopod Carbon Fibre 5-section Weight: 0.60kg Load: 5.0kg Folded: 47cm Height: 160cm £129.95	
679B Monopod Aluminum 3-section Weight: 0.60kg Load: 10.0kg Folded: 64cm Height: 162cm £34.95	680B Monopod Aluminum 4-section Weight: 0.83kg Load: 10.0kg Folded: 51cm Height: 154cm £41.95	681B Monopod Aluminum 3-section Weight: 0.78kg Load: 12.0kg Folded: 67cm Height: 161cm £42.95	

MANFROTTO HEADS			
492 Ball Head non quick-release 1/4" thread Weight: 0.12kg Load: 2.0kg £27.95	234 Tilt Head Ideal for monopods Weight: 0.27kg Load: 2.5kg £14.95	234RC Tilt Head with RC2 quick release Weight: 0.27kg Load: 2.5kg £22.95	
494 RC2 Ball Head with RC2 quick release Weight: 0.32kg Load: 4.0kg £41.95	496 RC2 Ball Head with RC2 quick release Weight: 0.46kg Load: 6.0kg £50.95	498 RC2 Ball Head with RC2 quick release Weight: 0.67kg Load: 8.0kg £74.95	
468MG RC2 Hydrostatic Ball Head magnesium, with RC2 quick release Weight: 0.65kg Load: 10.0kg £167.95	468MG RC4 Hydrostatic Ball Head magnesium, with RC4 quick release Weight: 0.65kg Load: 10.0kg £167.95	222 Grip Action Ball Head with RC2 quick release Weight: 0.78kg Load: 5.0kg £69.95	
804 RC2 Pan / Tilt with RC2 quick release Weight: 0.79kg Load: 4.0kg £50.95	808 RC4 Pan / Tilt with RC4 quick release Weight: 1.42kg Load: 8.0kg £89.95	410 Geared Head with RC4 quick release Weight: 1.22kg Load: 5.0kg £139.95	
056 3D Head non quick-release 1/4" thread Weight: 0.50kg Load: 3.0kg £23.95	460MG 3D Head magnesium, with RC2 quick release Weight: 0.43kg Load: 3.0kg £61.95	This is just a small selection of the MANFROTTO range now available to try in our new showroom in Leamington Spa	

KODAK A range of sturdy, value-for-money Tripods, Monopods and Ball Heads.			
KODAK MONOPODS & TRIPODS			
C324 Monopod Aluminum 3-section Weight: 0.57kg Load: 8.0kg Folded: 54cm Height: 169cm £69.95	A284 Tripod Aluminum 4-section Weight: 2.17kg Load: 8.0kg Folded: 56cm Height: 154cm £73.95	CF284 Tripod Carbon Fibre 4-section Weight: 1.69kg Load: 8.0kg Folded: 56cm Height: 160cm £197.95	
KODAK HEADS			
BH02 Ball Head Quick release plate, spirit level, 360 degree rotation, dual control knobs Weight: 0.21kg Load: 6.0kg £22.95	BH22 Ball Head Sliding quick release plate, spirit level, 360 degree rotation, triple control knobs Weight: 0.40kg Load: 8.0kg £31.95	BH52 Ball Head Heavy duty sliding quick release plate, 360 degree rotation, triple control knobs Weight: 0.37kg Load: 8.0kg £33.95	
BH05 Ball Head Weight: 0.30kg Load: 8.0kg £26.95	BH25 Ball Head Weight: 0.53kg Load: 12.0kg £35.95	BH55 Ball Head Weight: 0.51kg Load: 12.0kg £38.95	
BH08 Ball Head Weight: 0.49kg Load: 12.0kg £29.95	BH28 Ball Head Weight: 0.74kg Load: 18.0kg £45.95	BH58 Ball Head Weight: 0.72kg Load: 18.0kg £49.95	

The 2009 TIPA "Best Accessory" award-winning Vanguard AltaPRO tripod range is set to revolutionise the way you think about tripods!

Unlike traditional tripods, the AltaPRO's Multi-Angle-Central-Column (MACC) allows the user to position the hexagonal central column at ANY angle from 0 to 130 degrees, without removing it from the tripod, while also allowing it to rotate a full 360 degrees! The clever Instant-Swivel-Stop-and-Lock (ISSL) mechanism allows photographers to securely reposition the central column in one simple movement, in a matter of seconds.

Other features include: independent height and angle adjustable legs, patented magnesium die-cast canopy, spiked and rubber feet, non-slip rubberised foam leg warmers, anti-shock column ring - true professional specification tripods!

AltaPRO 263AT Tripod Aluminum 3-section legs, magnesium canopy, Multi-Angle-Central-Column Weight: 2.05kg Load: 7.0kg Folded: 63cm Height: 169cm £119.95	AltaPRO 264AT Tripod Aluminum 4-section legs, magnesium canopy, Multi-Angle-Central-Column Weight: 2.10kg Load: 7.0kg Folded: 53cm Height: 159cm £129.95
Alta+ 263AT Tripod Aluminum 3-section legs, magnesium canopy, standard central column Weight: 1.59kg Load: 5.0kg Folded: 63cm Height: 161cm £89.95	Alta+ 264AT Tripod Aluminum 4-section legs, magnesium canopy, standard central column Weight: 1.64kg Load: 5.0kg Folded: 53cm Height: 171cm £99.95
Alta+ 233AT Aluminum 3-section legs, standard column Weight: 1.26kg Load: 3.0kg Folded: 53cm Height: 151cm £69.95	Alta+ 234AT Aluminum 4-section legs, standard column Weight: 1.21kg Load: 3.0kg Folded: 43cm Height: 136cm £74.95
Alta+ 235AT Aluminum 5-section legs, standard column Weight: 1.18kg Load: 3.0kg Folded: 38cm Height: 116cm £79.95	Alta+ 224CT Carbon Fibre 4-section legs, standard column Weight: 0.92kg Load: 3.0kg Folded: 41cm Height: 125cm £179.95

VANGUARD Special Package Deals

Alta+ 233AT Tripod **£69.95**
PH22 Pan/Tilt Head **£34.95**

Special Deal Price: **£79** **SAVING £25**

Alta+ 264AT Tripod **£99.95**
PH31 Pan/Tilt Head **£54.95**

Special Deal Price: **£109** **SAVING £45**

VANGUARD MONOPODS			
AP284 Monopod Aluminum 4-section legs Weight: 0.57kg Load: 8.0kg Folded: 51.5cm Height: 158cm £33.95	AP324 Monopod Aluminum 4-section legs Weight: 0.69kg Load: 10.0kg Folded: 53.5cm Height: 167cm £38.95	CP324 Monopod Carbon Fibre 4-section legs Weight: 0.55kg Load: 10.0kg Folded: 53.5cm Height: 167cm £89.95	
VANGUARD HEADS			
SBH30 Ball Head Lightweight magnesium alloy, angle adjuster knob, 2 spirit levels, quick release plate Weight: 0.22kg Load: 5.0kg £39.95	SBH50 Ball Head Lightweight magnesium alloy, angle adjuster knob, 2 spirit levels, quick release plate Weight: 0.25kg Load: 6.0kg £49.95	SBH100 Ball Head Lightweight magnesium alloy, angle adjuster knob, 2 spirit levels, quick release plate Weight: 0.39kg Load: 10.0kg £64.95	
PH21 Pan / Tilt 2-way fluid head, magnesium, spirit level, quick release Weight: 0.35kg Load: 3.0kg £34.95	PH31 Pan / Tilt 2-way fluid head, magnesium, spirit level, quick release Weight: 0.43kg Load: 5.0kg £54.95	TRIPOD BAGS BAG50 £7.95 BAG60 £8.95 BAG70 £9.95 Durable, lightweight, with shoulder strap.	
PH22 Pan / Tilt 3-way fluid head, magnesium, spirit level, quick release Weight: 0.34kg Load: 3.0kg £34.95	PH32 Pan / Tilt 3-way fluid head, magnesium, spirit level, quick release Weight: 0.42kg Load: 5.0kg £54.95	This is just a small selection of the VANGUARD range now available to try in our new showroom in Leamington Spa	

Hahnel HW433 Wireless Pro Remote Shutter Release

Ultra high frequency 433MHz professional radio remote control, with a range of up to 50 metres. Autofocus, Bulb Function and Continuous Shooting functions. 4 digit code selector allows individual codes to be set to eliminate interference from other sources.

Each kit contains a wireless transmitter, a receiver with camera shoe and connectors to allow it to plug into your camera, plus a short distance cable operated shutter release.

Available for Canon, Nikon, Sony, Olympus, Pentax and Samsung.

Winner of the 2009 Gear of the Year Best Accessory Award! **£59.95**

hahnel Pro Remote Special Deal

HW433 Wireless Pro Remote **RRP: £59.95**
2-Axis Spirit Level **RRP: £29.95**

Special Deal Price: **£49**
SAVING £40 While Stocks Last

Hahnel Cable Remote Shutter Release

An innovative cable remote control for digital SLRs, with interchangeable camera connectors and a 2 metre extension lead, giving the choice of shutter release from 0.8 or 2.8 metres. Autofocus, Bulb Function and Continuous Shooting functions.

Available for Canon, Nikon, Sony, Olympus, and Pentax. **£19.95**

Seculine Twin-1 ISR Interval Shutter Release

The new Seculine Twin-1 ISR is a wired interval shutter release with a built in timer and large, clear, easy to read LCD display. Easy variable interval time setting - from 1 sec to 99 hours, 99 minutes and 99 seconds. Can be set to take up to 9999 shots in one session. Multiple exposure option. Convenient navigation button. Shutter lock for bulb shooting. Half shutter release control. Intuitive beep sound indication.

Available for Canon, Nikon, Sony, Fuji, Pentax and Samsung. **£49.95**

TrekTech

Trek Tech was formed in 2004 after the founders identified a market need based on personal outdoor experience - the need for a sturdy, lightweight, multi-purpose device with the functionality of both a tripod and trekking pole/hiking staff.

The result is the TrekPod, a lightweight, height-adjustable walking/hiking staff, with a fully integrated tripod, and a magnetic quick-release ball head system called the MagMount.

The unique MagMount quick release system incorporates a Neodymium "super magnet" as the initial connection between the ball head and a steel quick-release plate, called a MagAdapter, that screws into the bottom of your camera. A safety clip that stores below the ball head securely locks your device to the MagMount ball head. Each MagMount ball head is supplied with two MagAdapter quick release plates.

TrekPod II - £69.95 A refined version of the original TrekPod, using aircraft-grade aluminum alloy, it comes complete with a MagMount ball head, weighs 765g, and is capable of supporting a camera system weighing up to 4kg. Maximum height in tripod mode of 146cm, and a maximum height in monopod mode of 158cm. The TrekPod II collapses down to 90cm.	TrekPod GO PRO - £129.95 The TrekPod GO PRO is a more compact TrekPod, collapsing down to just 58cm, yet still expanding to the same maximum height as the TrekPod II. Supplied with a travel case, it is small enough to qualify as aircraft hand luggage. Weighing 794g including the MagMount ball head that comes as part of the package, it is able to support 4kg.						
TrekPod XL - £259.95 The TrekPod XL is the top of the range TrekPod. Utilizing Carbon Fibre tubes, this is the lightest TrekPod ever, weighing in at just 480g, yet retaining the same dimensions as the TrekPod GO. It includes the larger MagMount PRO ball head.	<table> <tr> <td> MagMount The original MagMount ball head. Weighing in at just 73g, it is capable of holding 4kg. £24.95 </td> <td> MagMount STAR The same size as a standard MagMount, with a Square Tooth Anti Rotation (STAR) connection surface between the ball head and the MagAdapter quick release plate. Weighing 79g, with a maximum load rating of 4kg. £34.95 </td> <td> MagMount PRO Utilising the same Square Tooth Anti Rotation system as the MagMount STAR, the MagMount PRO is a larger ball head, weighing 127g, and capable of holding an impressive 6kg. £64.95 </td> </tr> <tr> <td> MagAdapter Light £5.95 </td> <td> MagAdapter Heavy £6.95 </td> <td> MagAdapter STAR £9.95 </td> </tr> </table>	MagMount The original MagMount ball head. Weighing in at just 73g, it is capable of holding 4kg. £24.95	MagMount STAR The same size as a standard MagMount, with a Square Tooth Anti Rotation (STAR) connection surface between the ball head and the MagAdapter quick release plate. Weighing 79g, with a maximum load rating of 4kg. £34.95	MagMount PRO Utilising the same Square Tooth Anti Rotation system as the MagMount STAR, the MagMount PRO is a larger ball head, weighing 127g, and capable of holding an impressive 6kg. £64.95	MagAdapter Light £5.95	MagAdapter Heavy £6.95	MagAdapter STAR £9.95
MagMount The original MagMount ball head. Weighing in at just 73g, it is capable of holding 4kg. £24.95	MagMount STAR The same size as a standard MagMount, with a Square Tooth Anti Rotation (STAR) connection surface between the ball head and the MagAdapter quick release plate. Weighing 79g, with a maximum load rating of 4kg. £34.95	MagMount PRO Utilising the same Square Tooth Anti Rotation system as the MagMount STAR, the MagMount PRO is a larger ball head, weighing 127g, and capable of holding an impressive 6kg. £64.95					
MagAdapter Light £5.95	MagAdapter Heavy £6.95	MagAdapter STAR £9.95					

Telephone: 01926 339977 or 0800 1077 211

E&OE. Prices may be subject to change, but hopefully not!

by Internet

SALE NOW ON most prices held at 15% VAT till end of Jan 2010 see website

Plustek Film Scanners

Dedicated 35mm film scanners for amateurs and professionals alike. High resolution and very easy to operate.

7500i AI **MORRIS SAVE YOU £34!** **£259.97**
7600i SE **MORRIS SAVE YOU £41!** **£239.00**

Lowepro Mini Trekker AW

This lightweight, compact backpack holds a surprising amount of gear in a small space. There's a quick-release integrated tripod holder, attachment loops for optional StipLock accessories, compression straps and lots of pockets including a large front pocket with a weather flap and quick-access front pocket. The ergonomic harness features wide, padded shoulder straps and a sternum strap. Carries one SLR with attached 80-200mm f/2.8 lens (most makes), additional body, 4 extra lenses.

Mini Trekker AW Green **£49.95**

Lowepro Primus AW Backpack

A perfect combination of fast access and all weather protection. Rugged construction with a recycled, water resistant outer fabric and a seam-sealed AW cover protects gear. This pack also conforms to a variety of body types with an adjustable 8-point harness system giving you exceptional comfort under heavy load.

Primus AW Black **£54.97**

Tamrac Aero Speed Pack

The perfect solution for the photographer who prefers the comfort of a backpack, but also wants to quickly access photo gear. Tamrac's innovative Dual Entry System™ allows fast access to camera gear through a side door when the packs are worn over one shoulder, and through the front panel when used like traditional backpacks.

Aero Speed Pack 85 **£75.95**
Aero Speed Pack 80 **MORRIS SAVE YOU £34! £66.95**
Aero Speed Pack 75 **MORRIS SAVE YOU £34! £56.95**
Aero Speed Pack 70 **MORRIS SAVE YOU £34! £46.50**



Tamrac Adventure 75 Rust

Lightweight, high-mobility backpack providing foam-lined protection and quick access to multiple SLRs, lenses, flash and accessories. The interior lid of the main compartment features their patented memory & battery management system™ using red flags to identify available memory cards & batteries. Windowpane-Mesh™ pockets organize film, filters and other small accessories. The QuickClip™ tripod system holds a tripod centered and balanced on the pack. A comfortable, foam-padded backpack harness and adjustable waist strap provide easy carrying comfort. Other features include: LockDown™ Rain Flap for weather protection, front pocket to hold a light jacket or accessories, and an EasyGrip™ carrying handle.

Adventure 75 Rust **£49.97**

Velbon Ultra Luxi L Tripod

Mainly aluminium, making it lightweight and giving it a contemporary look. It uses simple twist locks on the legs for quick and easy use. The center column is split allowing for low down macro photography. It features a PHD-41Q 3 way head which has three bubble levels and quick release system. Free carry bag.

Ultra Luxi L Tripod **£78.97**
Ultra Luxi M Tripod **MORRIS SAVE YOU £43! £61.97**
Ultra Luxi L Tripod **MORRIS SAVE YOU £43! £59.97**
Ultra Luxi M Tripod **MORRIS SAVE YOU £43! £61.97**

Velbon Sherpa Pro CF537 Kit

The PRO-537 tripod has a magnesium alloy body and carbon legs, with retractable spiked rubber feet. It has 3-section legs with foam grip and lever locking systems. Three different leg angles Full, semi, and low angle positions. Split center column enables the tripod to be used at low level. Light weight yet, sturdy tripod for advanced amateurs or semi pros. Comes complete with FHD-52Q fluid head.

Sherpa Pro CF537 Kit **£139.97**
Sherpa Pro CF545 Tripod **£146.97**
Sherpa Pro CF645 Tripod **£166.97**

Velbon GEO Tripods IN STOCK

Please see website

Interfit Strobes

EFX Kit includes...
2 x Honeycombs grid - 20° & 30°
1 x Snoot, 1 x Veilco strap,
1 x Bounce card set,
1 x Honeycomb bounce tube
1 X Soft carry case.

Strobe EFX Kit **MORRIS SAVE YOU £6!** **£74.90**
Portrait Kit includes...
1 x Beauty dish, 1 x Globe diffuser, 1 x Softbox (White),
1 x Barn-door set, 1 x Snoot, 1 x Honeycomb,
1 X Soft Carry Case

Strobe Portrait Kit **MORRIS SAVE YOU £20!** **£99.90**
Please note that to use these Strobes kits with your own flashgun, you will also need...
Strobe Flex Mount (all fits) **£6.99**

Hama Wireless Remote

Has a serial release and time exposure with a range of 30 metres, which will travel through walls. Installation is a breeze with the 'remote' input. Features a two-stage release key, which is autofocus, and release.

Wireless Remote (each) To fit Canon (RS60, RS80), Nikon (MC30, MCDC1), Sony (RSS1) **£27.95**
NEW! Nikon (MCDC2) **£29.95**

Giotto's MTL9251B + MH5011

Vertical column 3 Section aluminium tripod offering simple yet stable support. The legs feature the new quick action lever locks to make tripod set up quick and easy. Foam grips on top leg sections means repositioning of the tripod is comfortable while quick release locks allow the leg angle settings to be adjusted independently. MH5011 head is ideal for those looking for precise and accurate camera positioning. Each axis of movement is controlled by a lockable handle so that you can adjust them independently.

MTL9251B + MH5011 **£96.90**

Manfrotto 190XDB + 056

Light in weight and compact, the leg angle release mechanism and the wing locking knobs have been greatly improved. The 190XDB does not feature a horizontal center column feature, it does share a new ergonomically improved design with its 190XPROB sibling. The 056 head features a self adjusting conical bearing locking system that allows 360° rotation on both the vertical and horizontal plane. This is the ideal head for 35mm and light to medium format work.

190XDB Tripod + 056 Head **£89.95**

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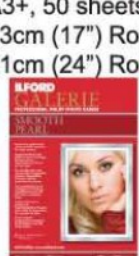
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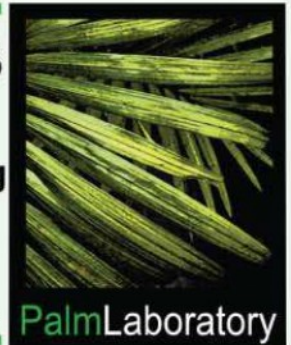
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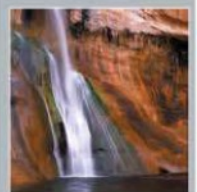
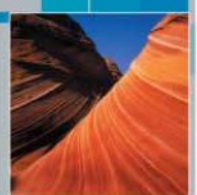
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... ON LIVING IN THE PAST AND SEARCHING FOR OBJECTS OF DESIRE



ROGER HICKS is a much-published author on photography. He has written more than three dozen books on the subject, many in partnership with his wife, Frances Schultz. Roger started photography as a teenager in the 1960s and worked professionally in a London advertising studio in the mid-1970s. He has been a freelance photographer/writer since 1981, contributing to many photography magazines, including *Shutterbug* in America. Visit his website at www.rogerandfrances.com.

NONE of us lives wholly in the present: it's impossible. We live partly in the past, and partly in the future. The past is made up of all kinds of things: possessions; education; relationships; commitments (they are not the same thing); memories, fond and unfond. There are of course plenty of other things that tie us to the past. Likewise, there are many aspects to the future, partaking of various degrees of certainty. I am reasonably certain that I know what I am going to eat for dinner tonight. On Tuesdays, my wife usually goes to the sewing circle. We have plans for next summer, depending on which friends come to stay. And so forth.

The interesting part comes when we look hard at our balance of past, present and future. We can sometimes do this best by looking at the way others balance things, and by looking at our own attitudes and how they have changed, are changing and may yet change with time.

In particular, we need to ask ourselves whether our ambitions are appropriate to our circumstances. That camera, watch or car you've 'always wanted': is it the you of today that wants it, or is it still the you of yesterday? And may not the you of tomorrow want something else?

For me, digital cameras afford an especially fine example. Ever since I got my first Nikon DSLR, I have known that I couldn't really live without a reasonably high-quality digital camera, simply because it's the quickest, easiest, cheapest way to illustrate magazine articles.

On the other hand, I regard DSLRs in much the same light as I regard washing machines and refrigerators. I don't want to live without them, and I want the best I can afford, but I can't get excited about them. They are superb tools, but not objects of desire. Unlike, for example, rangefinder cameras (which I also find vastly superior for travel photography) or, for that matter, wooden large-format cameras. Or Alpas. Note, too, that 'object of desire' does not preclude 'professional-quality tool, used as part of earning a living'.

I don't think my opinions about the best cameras for me are likely to change much in the near future: I've been thinking about them so hard, and using them so much for so many years that I'm pretty happy with what I've got. Currently, this means digital for colour, and film for black & white. It also means minimal automation, though I admit to a weakness for coupled film wind and shutter cocking. But am I living in the past?

Well, sort of. But I'm also living within the boundaries of what I like and what I can afford. The most pressing example for me at the moment is not from photography at all, but from motorcars. I'd be quite happy if I could find a desirable, affordable

second car that is as simple as my Land Rover, as easy to maintain, and for which parts are as cheap. Fuel economy is secondary, because this is a car for Frances, simply because she finds the Land Rover too big

and heavy: it has no power steering and no power brakes.

There is no such car. Intriguingly, the few cars that come close, such as the old Morris Minor, Renault 4, Peugeot 504 or the Citroën 2CV 'tin snail' now command prices that would have been unthinkable a decade ago, so it appears I am not the only one who is looking for such things.

Then I look at the 1995 Twingo that some friends of mine run as a second car. They paid £800 for it six years ago, and apart from a new battery and the yearly *Contrôle Technique* (MoT) they have spent virtually nothing on maintenance. If it died tomorrow, they'd only have spent about £200 a year since they bought it, including depreciation but excluding insurance and petrol: something of a bargain. Of course, they've been lucky. It could have gone bang after a year. But I can't help wondering whether I'm living too much in the past. Even if I'm not that keen on moving a great deal of my life (except digital cameras) into the 21st century, maybe I could at least move into the mid-1990s and start looking for a second car, even if it is not an object of desire. **AP**

“Ever since I got my first Nikon DSLR, I have known that I couldn't really live without a reasonably high-quality digital camera”

Editorial

Amateur Photographer, IPC Media, Blue Fin Building, 110 Southwark Street, London SE1 0SU
Telephone 0203 148 4138 **Fax** 0203 148 8130
Email amateurphotographer@ipcmedia.com
Picture returns: **Telephone** 0203 148 4121
Email appicturedesk@ipcmedia.com

Subscriptions

Telephone 0845 676 7778

Advertising

Amateur Photographer, IPC Media, Blue Fin Building, 110 Southwark Street, London SE1 0SU. **Telephone:** 0203 148 2517
Email lee_morris@ipcmedia.com
Classified telephone 0203 148 2929. **Fax:** 0203 148 8158
Display telephone 0203 148 2517. **Fax:** 0203 148 8158
Inserts call Innovator on 0203 148 3710

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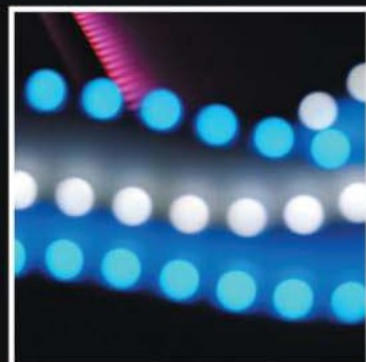
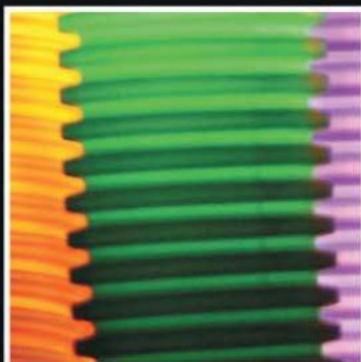
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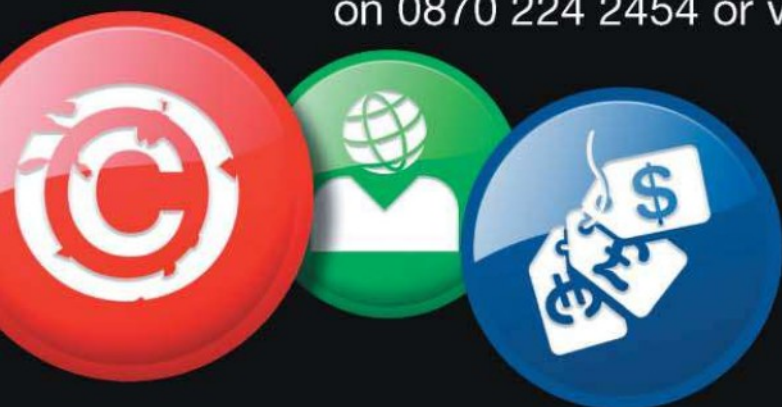
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